

FREE

# Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk July 27, 2014

East Edition No 618

## POLICE »

**Ann Barnes  
vows to change**  
Crime commissioner  
turns over new leaf

## POLITICS »

**Let's get ready  
to rumble**

Focus on key political  
battlegrounds for 2015

## EVENTS »

**Your guide to  
Lounge on the Farm**

Festival map and  
stage times inside

## DEATH »

# Peaches' final hours

**She was raised in the county and died  
in it; inquest confirms drugs tragedy**

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## Why Ukip could be the deciding vote in General Election

NORMALLY in the build-up to an election, it is more often than not that the main discussion point in the county is just what will be the margin of a Conservative victory.

When we all take a jaunt to the polling booths next May, however, things may be a little different.

Because the rise of Ukip could pull the rug from under the Tories' feet.

It's not that anyone realistically expects Ukip to be sending a big contingent to Westminster – in truth it would seem likely only Nigel Farage stands any chance of being elected from his party – but its ability to split the vote could create some interesting movement in a number of seats.

As part of what will be no doubt our extensive countdown, we this week take a look at three seats we believe will become key battlegrounds, with some fascinating scraps between candidates.

Even if, when



Editor **Chris Britcher**

the votes are counted, the status quo remains, it's fair to say this election will be the most fascinating since Tony Blair swept to power in 1997.

A story which has kept us morbidly fascinated this week was the inquest into the tragic death of Peaches Geldof and the verdict that it was due to a heroin overdose.

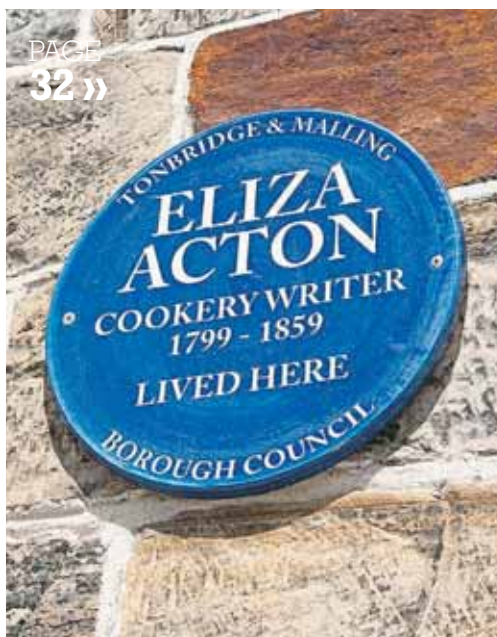
Regardless of your views on drugs or celebrity, we should be united in wishing only our condolences to her friends and family. Everyone makes mistakes, everyone is capable of making bad decisions. This one cost the 25-year-old, her two young sons, her husband and her family a terrible, terrible price.

Elsewhere, there's plenty of fascinating articles inside to lift your mood, from an artist whose canvas is our sandy beaches to a guide to popular music festival

Lounge on the Farm.

Have a great weekend.

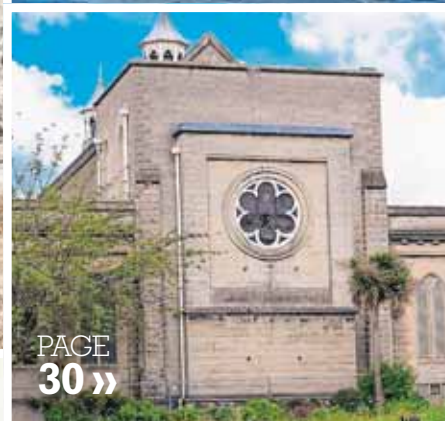
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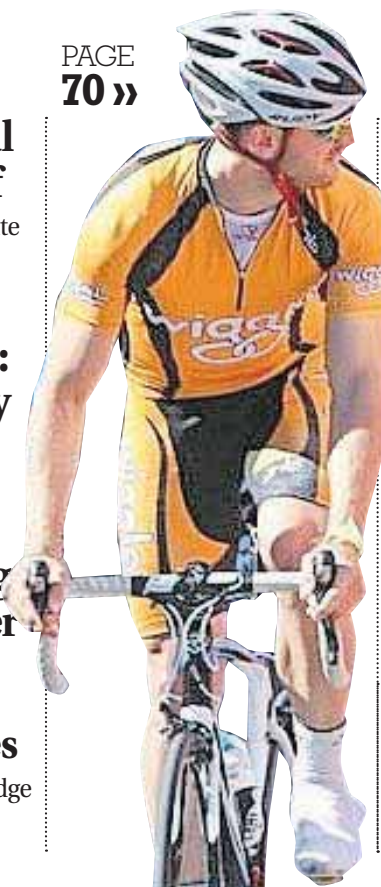
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## Ann Barnes promises to shift the focus from her

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

POLICE and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes has officially outlined how she will get her act together after the debacle of the Channel 4 documentary which saw her exposed to ridicule.

At a meeting of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel at County Hall on Thursday afternoon, the commissioner gave assurances that her 'behaviour' would change, that she would do less individual publicity – and that she would retire her £15,000 van, known as Ann Force One.

However, that decision did meet some opposition from panel members, who said it was an asset to her duties and may get a reprieve after further consideration.

The meeting followed the airing of the universally-derided Meet the Commissioner documentary in May, in which Mrs Barnes appeared unable to define her own job, brought her dogs into a meeting and talked for so long at a public meeting that some people fell asleep.

Following the documentary, she was hauled before the panel, which



**CHANGE:** Kent PCC stands in front of Ann Force One, her 'mobile office'. Picture: Channel 4

scrutinises her decisions, where she escaped a vote of no confidence but was told that she must come up with a strategy on how she would "change her approach".

Mrs Barnes told the panel this afternoon that she would move away from her efforts to raise awareness of her role towards a "more business as usual mode".

"There will be less of the 'confetti big bang' publicity, less of me an individual and more focus on the output and delivery," she said.

"And I will retire my van, sadly. The decision is a difficult one as I don't know what I'm going to replace it with; it's a mobile office.

"But its reputation has been tarnished and I don't want that to detract from engagement with people. "At the last meeting there was also a lot of comment from members about my personal style and tone.

"I have reflected carefully on what you said and all interactions of mine from now on will look first at the audience and will be tailored to

the audience, using the right mix of tone and language and style."

Mrs Barnes said she would also give her website a more corporate feel and remove her name from the corporate Twitter account, and would spend more time meeting police officers informally.

"I need to put right the upset that some members of Kent Police feel," she added.

Panel chairman Mike Hill said he was "pleased" that Mrs Barnes had listened.

## Cannibal fetishist faces jail term after attempt to groom 14-year-old

A SELF-confessed cannibal fetishist has been found guilty of attempting to meet a girl under the age of 16 following sexual grooming.

He had stated in chats with her that he wanted to eat her.

This week, a jury at Canterbury Crown Court unanimously agreed that Dale Stanley Bolinger, 58, formerly of Davidson Road, Canterbury, was guilty of the offence.

He was convicted after emails were found between him and a person claiming to be a 14-year-old girl named Eva Gonzal.

During the email exchanges, Bolinger told the girl that he had got an axe and asked her if she was ready to meet him. The girl agreed to meet Bolinger at Ashford International train station after he outlined what sexual acts he would like to perform on her before killing and eating her. She never met him at the station in September 2012 and her identity has remained a mystery.

Bolinger was found guilty of the offence and pleaded guilty to 10

other offences, one of which was administering poison.

He had carried this out in 2010, when he held a cloth saturated with dry-cleaning fluid over a female friend's nose and mouth.

The former nurse had used the pseudonym 'Meatmarketman' to chat with people on a fetish website, discussing topics such as how to kidnap women and kill and eat them.

The investigation into Bolinger was conducted on both sides of the Atlantic, with the American FBI working in tandem with police in Kent.

He was arrested on February 21 and pleaded guilty to seven charges of publishing an obscene article, two charges of possessing an indecent photograph of a child and the single charge of administering poison.

During interviews with police, Bolinger admitted his interest in cannibalism but told officers that it was nothing more than a fantasy and that he had never acted on it.

He will be sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court in September.

## Arise Sir Hugh - ex sports minister gets knighthood

FAVERSHAM MP Hugh Roberston has been knighted for his work on the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Sir Hugh, who was minister for sport from 2010-12, was also given the award for his work as a minister at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, with responsibility for the Middle East, North Africa and counter-terrorism.

He said the news was "both exciting and humbling".

He was shadow sports and Olympics minister from 2004 until the Conservatives were elected in 2010, making him one of the two politicians, alongside Dame Tessa Jowell, who saw London 2012 through from bid to delivery.

He stepped down from the Cabinet during the recent reshuffle to spend more time with his family.

Sir Hugh said: "It was a terrific privilege to be part of London 2012."

## Demolition work finally gets under way on cinema site

IT HAS only taken 14 years, but the bulldozers finally moved on to the site of the long-closed cinema in the centre of Tunbridge Wells this week.

The former ABC picture house closed in 2000, but efforts to redevelop the site have constantly fallen through, leaving it as one of the historic spa town's biggest eye-sores.

Now, however, 12 weeks of

demolition work has got under way. Not that the main building will go just yet – the first stage of the work is primarily on surrounding buildings and the internal part of the building.

Ed Bellhouse, of developer Bellhouse Joseph, the joint venture behind the scheme, told us: "Work is progressing well and demolition began in earnest on Tuesday."

## Bid to bring abandoned brown bears to county

WILDLIFE conservation project Wildwood is looking to raise £50,000 to rescue two brown bears and bring them back to its park near Canterbury.

The charity runs the popular attraction in Herne Common. Now it is hoping to come to the rescue of the majestic creatures.

Explains a spokesman: "The bears are currently kept in small, barren concrete pits in an abandoned

bear-breeding centre called Kormisosh, in Bulgaria.

"Kormisosh was used to breed bears to be shot by hunters until 1993, when bear-hunting was outlawed. As a result, Kormisosh was abandoned, leaving the bears to a life of misery and neglect."

It has set a target of £50,000 to fund the building of a new enclosure, transporting the bears to Kent, vets' fees and a rehabilitation programme.



**RIP:** MidKent College's Sue McLeod

## Speeding foreign drivers set to lose escape route as police plan changes

**By Jamie Weir**

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FOREIGN lorry-drivers and tourists caught speeding on Kent's roads will no longer be able to get away with breaking the law, after tough new rules were proposed to clamp down on traffic offences across Europe.

The hardline approach has been proposed by Tispol, the European traffic police network that unites police forces across the Continent in a bid to make the roads safer.

Currently, drivers from abroad who speed on these roads are rarely prosecuted – with the same applying to British drivers on foreign roads.

It is estimated that more than 2,000 foreign drivers escaped charges after speeding in Kent.

According to the European Commission, non-resident drivers account for about 5 per cent of road traffic in the EU but are responsible for 15 per cent of detected speeding offences.

Cross-border enforcement could



**SPEED:** Aim to catch law-breakers

save 350-400 lives a year, according to an official impact assessment.

Tispol director Pasi Kemppainen said: "Europe-wide adoption of the new proposal will lead to more effective enforcement, which encourages

drivers to comply with safety rules and leads to a rapid reduction in deaths and injuries.

"Careful and considerate drivers, wherever they live in Europe, will have nothing to fear from this.

"As well as ensuring that no one has the chance to drive away from justice, the new legislation will help protect people when they drive abroad, because they will be using roads with greater compliance, fewer traffic offences and lower risks."

Antonio Avenoso, executive director of the European Transport Safety Council, said: "Letting foreign-registered drivers off the hook when they speed or drink and drive is unsafe, but it's also unfair.

"These rules are a smart way of deterring drivers from dangerous driving when they go abroad but will also help member states track down offenders that put other people's lives at risk.

"We urge EU member states and the new European Parliament to give the green light to the new proposal as soon as possible."

## Tributes paid after college chief, 53, dies

STUDENTS and staff at MidKent College were mourning the loss this week of its principal, Sue McLeod, who died suddenly on Wednesday – just a month after being diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Mrs McLeod was just 53.

She had worked at the college for more than 20 years and became its first-ever female principal just last September.

Chief executive Stephen Grix said: "Sue was an exceptional leader who inspired students and staff alike, and her commitment and passion for teaching was what drove her.

"Her energy, enthusiasm and ability to motivate others will be sorely missed.

"We have lost a very dear friend and a great principal."

A former travel and tourism lecturer, she joined the college in 1993 before climbing the ranks. She took up her post as principal in September 2013.

The college has campuses in Medway and Maidstone.

A highlight of her time as principal came last February when she visited Buckingham Palace to accept the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Further and Higher Education from the Queen on behalf of the college.

Vice-principal Simon Cook has been appointed acting principal by the board of governors.

## Vigil service to mark Great War centenary

THERE will be a special vigil service at at Canterbury Cathedral on the evening of August 4 to mark the centenary of the beginning of the First World War.

It will also be taking part in the British Legion's national 'Lights Out' campaign, which urges everyone to switch off their lights between 10pm and 11pm as a mark of respect to the millions who lost their lives during the conflict, which raged from 1914-1918.

The cathedral's nave will be open from 6pm for visitors, with a vigil service at 9.45 pm.

A spokesman for the cathedral explained: "As the vigil service progresses, the lights in the cathedral will be gradually dimmed and extinguished, reflecting the words of Sir Edward Grey, the foreign secretary in 1914, that 'the lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime'."

The floodlights that illuminate the cathedral across the city will go out at 10pm.

## Driver's bail extended in Brands Hatch case

A MOTORIST who was arrested on suspicion of driving on to the track at the world-famous Brands Hatch circuit in the middle of a race has had his bail extended.

Jack Cottle, 21, was arrested on suspicion of false imprisonment after a white VW Polo was driven on to the racecourse at Longfield, near West Kingsdown, last month.

A video of the escapade, shot by a back-seat passenger, apparently shows the car bypassing security from the circuit's outer gates before driving into the pit lane and then on to the track.

The clip, uploaded on to YouTube, has subsequently been viewed more than a million times across the world.

Mr Cottle, from Tonbridge, was arrested on June 15 following a police investigation. He claims he has received death threats since being linked to the case.

This week it was confirmed he has had his bail extended until August 18.

## Star Orlando Bloom in special theatre visit

MOVIE star Orlando Bloom was in Canterbury this week, to make a very special visit to the place where his acting career began.

The Lord of the Rings and Pirates of the Caribbean heartthrob is the first patron of the Marlowe Youth Theatre so made his first visit to the theatre in almost four years to view its progress.

Mr Bloom, 37, was born and raised in the city and his mother still lives locally.

And it was on the stage of The Marlowe Theatre that he made his debut, aged just four.

He said: "As a child, theatre was so fantastic for my confidence and to be involved in drama was invaluable support. I am very happy to be an ambassador."

Mr Bloom offered some advice to six of the budding actors: "Go for it. Follow your dreams. Roll up your sleeves and work hard for it. Have no expectations and if you follow your heart and want to be creative, this should lead to a happy and creative life."



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# A whole new story as Kent on Sunday enjoys its fresh surroundings

KENT on Sunday moved into its new offices earlier last month – so be sure to use our new address when you want to get in contact with us.

After 10 years in Smeeth, we began a new era for your favourite Kent weekend newspaper when we moved into Kent House in the heart of Ashford town centre.

Kent on Sunday's editorial, advertising and distribution teams are now based at the modern new offices, along with colleagues from our sister title, the glossy Kent Life magazine.

From here we will continue to deliver the finest regional newspaper for the entire county, with all the latest news, leisure, sport, business and your one-stop shop for the best offers from our loyal advertisers.

Archant Kent publisher Simon

Irwin said: "We enjoyed a great period of success at Apple Barn, winning a host of awards over the years and firmly establishing ourselves as a class apart for a free newspaper.

"And we continue to evolve, which is why we're now greatly looking forward to starting the next chapter of our success story."

Which means if you want to get in touch, you'll need to now address all correspondence to:

Kent on Sunday, Archant Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. All email addresses remain the same.

Our telephone numbers have changed, too. For all advertising enquiries, call 01233 653461; for editorial, call 01233 653475; for distribution, call 01233 653470.

• This is a revised version of last week's KoS article.



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# Peaches paid ultimate price for addiction she hid from husband

IT WAS a very modern tragedy, conducted in the public spotlight and with appalling echoes of a famous family's past.

Mother-of-two Peaches Geldof was just 25 when she was found slumped on the bed of a spare room in her home in Wrotham, near Sevenoaks, on April 7.

Her body was identified by her father, Sir Bob Geldof, at Darent Valley Hospital in Dartford.

This week, in a packed room at the Old Town Hall in Gravesend, a coroner heard of her last moments and ruled she had died after taking a heroin overdose.

It mirrored the death of her mother, the TV presenter Paula Yates who, in 2000, was found dead at her home in London having also taken an accidental overdose of the drug.

In a hushed room, police and medical experts attending the inquest explained the final known movements and actions of Ms Geldof, a model, presenter and journalist.

All had seemed normal in the 24 hours leading up to her death.

She had been in touch with friends and family, watched TV programmes and looked after her young sons.

But it seems that the night before her body was found she took heroin which proved such a shock to her system it killed her. Her family only raised the alarm the following day when they could not reach her.

Her musician husband, Thomas Cohen, the father of her two children Phaedra and Astala found her, slumped over a laptop and with drug equipment around her. He alerted the emergency teams.

As had been common when both were working, Mr Cohen had been staying in London.

It was apparent immediately that she was dead.

On Wednesday, Mr Cohen remained composed as he spoke of his wife's addiction which he thought she had beaten.

The couple had moved to Wrotham in September last year.

He told the court his wife had been on a two-and-a-half-year drug treatment programme which involved taking methadone – a popular replacement substance designed to wean users off heroin – and had been free of the drug from November 2013 until February of this year.

In February, he found suspicious messages on her phone which suggested she had started using the drug again. After he confronted her, she produced drugs which she had hidden in the loft of their home, and flushed them down the toilet.

Mr Cohen explained she had been having regular drug tests as part of her treatment, which she had told him were clear, but he now believes she had been lying about the results.

The truth was his wife had become hooked again.

When police searched her home following her death on April 7, they found hundreds of pounds worth of heroin with a high purity rating hidden in

She had the world at her feet; a loving husband and family, but this week's inquest into the tragic death of Peaches Geldof revealed how demons she had fought to keep at bay for years resurfaced – with fatal consequences. **Molly Kersey** reports



**“ The post-mortem found evidence of recent puncture marks on her elbows and her left hand; toxicology indicates a fatal level of heroin in the body ”**

**Paul Fotheringham**, detective chief inspector on Peaches' case

their bedroom, along with syringes and tourniquets made from tights.

Detective Chief Inspector Paul Fotheringham, who led the police investigation, told the inquest: “It has been established Peaches Geldof had been previously addicted to heroin for a number of years, but that more recently had ceased taking the drug.

“Peaches had been supported by drug treatment workers for two-and-a-half years after being prescribed methadone. She had indicated her desire to come off methadone complete-

ly, and was following a plan to reduce the amount she was taking.

“The post-mortem found evidence of recent puncture marks on the inside of both elbows and on her left hand; the toxicology [report] indicates a fatal level of heroin in the body.”

Initially, it had been reported by a national newspaper drugs were not suspected – that proved to be false.

It was also dismissed Ms Geldof had taken her own life.

Det Ch Insp Fotheringham explained: “There is no indication any third party was present or involved in her death and there is no indication

## FAMILY'S WOE

FOR the people of Kent the drama was particularly painful.

The county has long held the Geldof family close to its heart.

Bob Geldof, known for raising millions of pounds for the starving in Africa through the Band Aid and Live Aid projects of the 1980s, had moved to a sprawling home in Davington, near Faversham, around 30 years ago.

There, along with wife Paula Yates, he raised his family.

In the church which adjoins the priory they inhabit, Mr Geldof and Ms Yates blessed their marriage and christened their children: Fifi Trixibelle, Peaches and Pixie.

But their lives would take a terrible turn for the worse.

In 1995 the couple split. Ms Yates had a high-profile relationship with Michael Hutchence, singer with rock band INXS. The pair would have a child together – Tiger Lily – the following year.

But in November 1997, Mr Hutchence was found dead in a Sydney hotel room. A coroner ruled it suicide.

A distraught Ms Yates failed to come to terms with his death. On September 17, 2000, on Pixie's 10th birthday, Ms Yates was found dead at her home in London. The coroner ruled it was due to an “accidental” heroin overdose. Peaches Geldof was just 11 at the time. She later admitted she never got over the death.

A funeral service took place in Davington.

Peaches would spend her childhood between the family home in Chelsea and Faversham.

She married Thomas Cohen in the Faversham church in 2012. It would also host her funeral.

When she returned to Kent in 2013, it should have been to raise her own two young children. Instead, the county would mourn her passing – another Geldof tragedy played out among us.

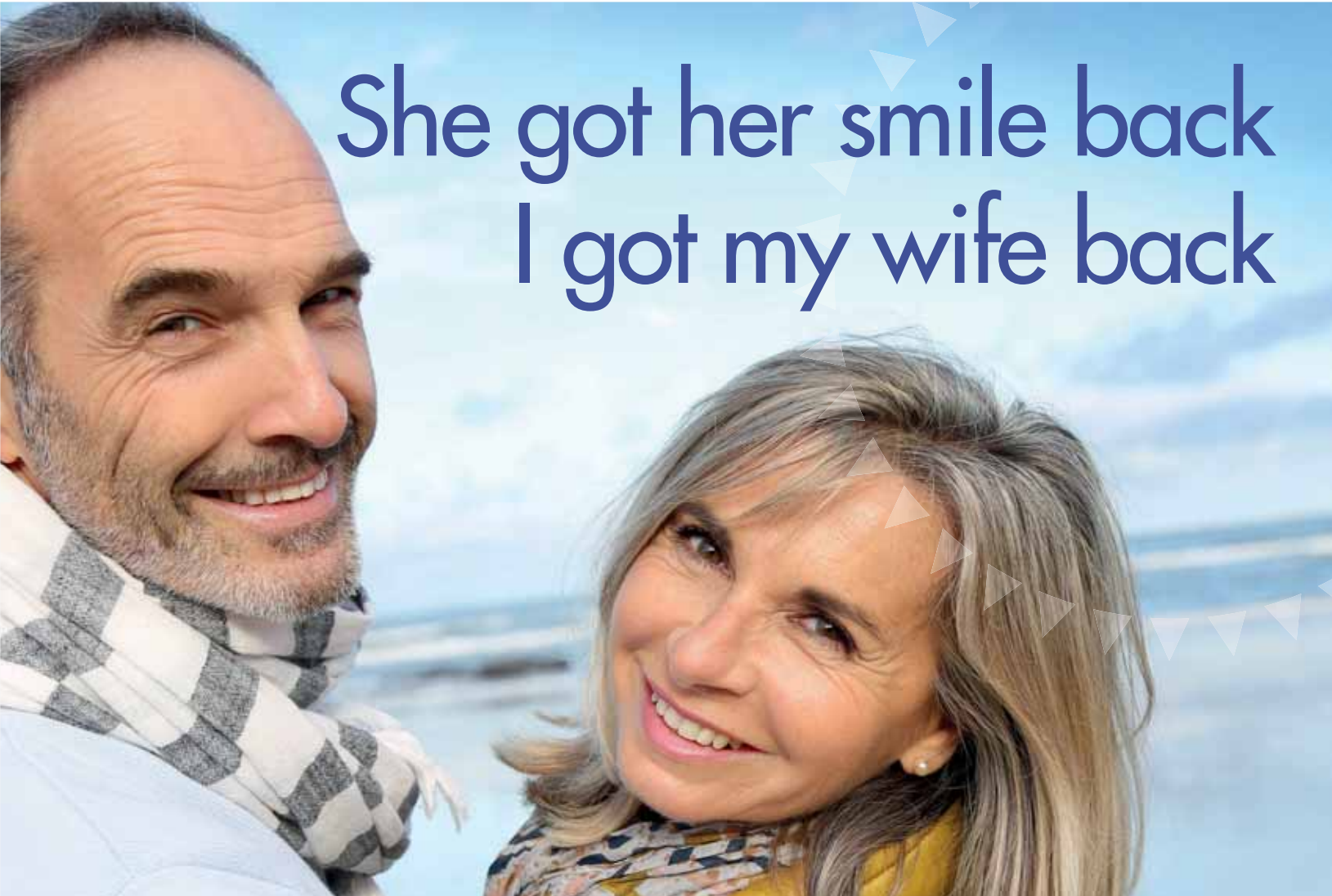
Peaches intended to take her own life or harm herself in any way as she was reported to be of happy disposition and planning for the future.”

A police investigation into who provided the drugs which killed her continues, but so far no arrests have been made.

Coroner Roger Hatch said: “I have no alternative other than to record the death was drug related and I express my sympathies to the families.”

The last post on Ms Geldof's Twitter account – the day before she died – was of a photograph of her as a child in her mother's arms.



A photograph of a middle-aged couple smiling at each other on a beach. The man is on the left, wearing a grey and white checkered scarf. The woman is on the right, with grey hair and a yellow top. The background shows a beach and the ocean under a blue sky with some clouds. There are decorative white triangles in the upper right corner.

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# So just who will have the 'X' factor come next year's General Election?

It is less than one year away and currently no one can forecast who will be the winner. As the political parties begin to ramp up their campaigns ahead of the nation going to the polls on May 7, 2015, **Sarah Linney** looks at four Kent seats that could be very keenly contested this time around

**I**F A week is a long time in politics, then nine months is long enough to give birth to a very exciting electoral campaign.

With the bitter taste of the European elections still in their mouths, the three main parties have less than a year to work out how they're going to do the thing that eluded them all last time – get enough MPs to form a government.

A quick look at the political map of Kent might suggest the Conservatives don't need to worry and no one else needs to bother. After a few forays into the red during the Blair years, in 2010 Kent went back to its natural colour – true blue all over.

The Tories now hold every seat in the county, with sizeable majorities all round.

But politics has changed a lot in five years, and with the rise in Ukip, which threatens to split right-leaning voters, and frustrations over the economy and continuing cuts, the assumption that the Tories will enjoy a comfortable victory across the county again is far from clear-cut.

As for the Liberal Democrats, it is hard to see them mounting a strong challenge given their flatlining in support.

We look at four seats we predict could see heavyweight battles in the race for Westminster.



## THANET SOUTH

Current MP: **Laura Sandys**  
**Conservative.**  
Majority: 7,617

THANET South is a bit like the Lady Gaga of politics. It's constantly demanding media attention and no one quite knows what it's going to do next – but, whatever happens, it's sure to remain under the national spotlight.

Like so many other seats, it is the impact of Ukip that will determine its fate.

It performed strongly in Thanet in the European elections, polling a remarkable 46 per cent of the votes, and holds seven of the district's eight county council seats.

As a consequence, it's the seat where Ukip leader Nigel Farage is being most closely linked. Love him or loathe him, his charismatic appeal could be hard to derail. Especially as his presence will make the seat one of the most high-profile in the country.

To make it far more intriguing, the incumbent MP, Conservative Laura Sandys, is stepping down – thus the only guarantee is that it will have a new MP by May 8.

The Tories are fielding Craig Mackinlay – a clever choice.

Mr Mackinlay is a former leader of Ukip and a friend of Nigel Farage. He also ran against Ann Barnes in the race to be Kent's first Police and Crime Commissioner.

He has called on Mr Farage to stand aside and allow Ukip voters to get behind him in the interests of the Eurosceptic cause.

"It is common sense because I have common ground with Ukip," Mr Mackinlay said.

"If you are a Tory Ukip voter it now seems to me an obvious choice that

you would think I don't need to do that Ukip vote because I have a champion who thinks exactly as I do."

Mr Farage, who lives in Westerham, steadfastly refused to comment this week but had previously told KoS: "This makes not one bit of difference. We will be fighting Thanet South to win it and I have every belief we can do so."

Political commentator Iain Dale, who lives in Pembury and presents the drive-time show on radio station LBC, said the battle would be close.

"If Farage stands here he has to win," Mr Dale said.

"He's up against a former ally in Craig Mackinlay, who is not to be underestimated. Laura Sandys has been a very popular constituency MP and bequeathes him a good legacy.

"However, having suffered an ignominious defeat to the hapless Ann Barnes in the police commissioner election, he hasn't got a good track record of winning important elections.

"Labour held this seat during the Blair years and are on level terms with the Tories. Farage's performance depends on how much he can eat into the Labour vote."

## VERDICT?

*If Farage stands, it's his to lose*



#### GILLINGHAM & RAINHAM

Current MP: **Rehman Chishti**  
**Conservative**  
 Majority: 8,680

UKIP chums past and present might be slugging it out against each other in Thanet South – but they've got nothing on the machinations of Medway's most hotly-contested seat.

Once upon a time, the seat was held by Labour MP Paul Clark – elected in 1997 and a party colleague of one Rehman Chishti, then a Labour councillor.

Mr Chishti even stood for the Labour Party in the 2005 General Election, losing to Francis Maude in Horsham – and as councillor for Gillingham North ward he would have been involved with Mr Clark's campaign, too.

So there was shock all round when he experienced a Damascene conversion the following year, defected to the Conservative Party and in 2010 stood for the Tories against his former mentor Mr Clark and defeated him.

One senior Labour figure in Medway described it as the "ultimate betrayal".

Now, in perhaps the most mouth-watering of clashes, the two go head to head again next year.

"Until 2005," explains Mr Clark, 57, "Rehman was talking about how Tony Blair was doing an excellent job – then suddenly it switched.

"I think many of my colleagues believed that it was for self-promotion – I clearly wasn't going to be standing down in 2010, so there was no chance of him being a Labour candidate here.

"The fact that he is still a councillor sends the wrong message about the roles of an MP and a councillor. Being an MP is a full-time job and I don't think you can do both."

Not, he said, that the campaign

trail was uncomfortable last time around.

"During the campaign," Mr Clark says, "I didn't see him as anything other than a Conservative who was following policies which I thought would be bad for Gillingham and Rainham and for Kent.

"In a general election people are not voting for their local MP, they are voting for who they want to be running the country, and they clearly didn't want that to be Labour and Gordon Brown. When they elected me, I didn't think they were voting for me personally."

Mr Clark – who lives in Gillingham and has lived in the constituency all his life – says he believes he now has a good chance of snatching the seat back despite Mr Chishti's majority.

We tried on numerous attempts to contact Mr Chishti, but he was unavailable for comment.

Iain Dale said that, despite Mr Chishti's majority, Mr Clark had every chance of winning the seat back.

"If Labour is to form the next government they need to win back seats like Gillingham and Rainham, which they held throughout the Blair years," he said.

"Mr Chishti's majority is far larger than anyone predicted in 2010, but it is far from being a safe seat.

"Ukip will eat into his vote and Labour will hope to benefit from the crumbling Lib Dem support.

"Paul Clark was a popular and effective local MP, too, and will have retained a bit of a personal vote.

"This will be a very close fight and may come down to how the constituency has changed demographically."

#### VERDICT?

*Labour could claw this one back*

#### DOVER

Current MP: **Charlie Elphicke**  
**Conservative**  
 Majority: 5,274

AMONG the uniformly true-blue territories of Kent, Dover is the closest thing the county has to a marginal seat.

Charlie Elphicke's majority would seem a pretty safe threshold – but the seat was Labour until 1997 and has oscillated between the two parties in decades gone by.

It is seen as an excellent barometer of national opinion and it is said that whoever wins in Dover is likely to win the election overall – so all eyes will be on the constituency over the next nine months.

Dover is also one of the two Kent seats that Labour have said they will target strongly, with the other being Chatham and Aylesford, the seat currently held by Tracy Crouch.

The situation is compounded by the growing popularity of Ukip in an area



that naturally welcomes a high number of immigrants – the party polled almost 40 per cent of the vote in the European elections in May.

Mr Elphicke told KoS: "It is going to be a very close battle.

"I am not complacent. I am going to do my best and will be working tirelessly for every vote, but I am not taking victory for granted – I never do."

The interest [for observers] or the worry [for the Conservatives] comes from the fact that, as Mr Elphicke admits, "it's not clear who the opposition is".

"Labour are bleeding support locally to Ukip, who have had a surge at the expense of Labour and the Lib Dems," he said, side-stepping the fact that it will surely bite the biggest chunk out of his Tory vote.

"As for Nigel Farage, I don't know where he will stand, but I think he needs to get on with it and make a decision, otherwise people just won't take him seriously."

Labour candidate Clair Hawkins, a Dover native who now lives in Deal, is a newcomer to the district's political scene but has been a councillor in east London.

The 37-year-old said she could defi-

nately win back the seat that popular MP Gwyn Prosser held throughout Labour's 13-year term.

"It's not going to be an easy seat to win back, but I think people are realising that we need something different from what this government has delivered," she said.

Mr Dale said that both candidates had their strengths – but that the result might not be determined by either of them.

"This is another seat Labour need to win back if they are to form a government – and Dover's result may well depend on how Ukip perform and where they take their support from," he said.

"Mr Elphicke has emulated Mr Prosser and maintained a high profile both nationally and locally. His fight to protect Dover's Trust Port status was successful and he has been outspoken on immigration."

#### VERDICT?

*Tories to cling on by their fingernails*

#### SHEPWAY

Current MP: **Damian Collins**  
**Conservative**  
 Majority: 10,122

SINCE Sir Harry Mackeson won a 9,882 majority in the newly-created constituency of Folkestone and Hythe in 1950, the seat has been a safe Tory stronghold.

But support for Ukip is becoming increasingly high here. At the county council elections last year, the party won four of the six seats and the constituency has been tipped as a possible choice for Nigel Farage if he doesn't go for Thanet South.

If he does stand in Thanet, there are rumours that the Shepway candidate will be south east Euro MP Janice Atkinson.

"We will go out and campaign hard for every vote and never take it for granted," Conservative MP Damian Collins told KoS.

"I am not going to get particularly distracted by what the other parties will do. In the county council elections, more people voted Conservative in Folkestone and Hythe than for any other party.

"Those elections were fought two years ago and the big thing that is changing all the time is the economic recovery."

The Conservatives polled 1,293 more votes than Ukip across the constituency during the county council elections as a whole.

Liberal Democrat candidate Lynne Beaumont lost to Mr Collins in 2010 but polled almost 16,000 votes – and she sounded optimistic about her renewed candidacy this time.

"Historically, the smaller party always gets totally trounced in a coalition," Ms Beaumont said.



"But what we have done is beyond amazing. We took on the biggest recession since the Second World War and we stopped the crash – and have completely transformed it.

"We now have more people in employment than ever before.

"We had to give up some things that we absolutely believed in, but so did the Tories. I think they are probably more unhappy than we are."

Ms Beaumont added: "Nigel Farage really doesn't care, he's just going to stand where he thinks he has a chance. I think if he wants to show people he has got balls, he should stand in Thanet South – although if he is against Craig Mackinlay it's going to become a Ukip battle."

However, Mr Dale said Mr Collins would not only hold on to his seat but might enjoy an increased majority.

"The Lib Dems always imagine they will win this seat but never do, or even come close," he said.

"Mr Collins is set to stay MP for Folkestone as long as he doesn't blot his copybook. The Lib Dems look set to implode nationally and if they do so here, too, his majority could increase by a massive margin."

#### VERDICT?

*Tories to keep Shepway true blue*

■ What do you think? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk).



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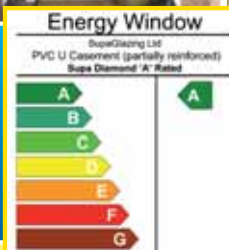
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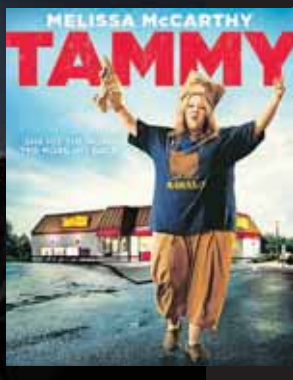
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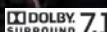
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# Will ferry firm finally take to the seas?



**Euroferries Ltd is back... and this time not only is it launching a new ferry service from Ramsgate to Boulogne, it is also sponsoring Millwall FC to help promote its new coach service to London, but, asks Jamie Weir, haven't we been here before?**

**H** EARD the one about the high-speed ferry service without any boats?

Well, it may sound like a joke, but one firm continues to suggest otherwise, by maintaining it will launch a service linking Ramsgate to Boulogne, on the French coast, later this year and promising a crossing time of just 75 minutes.

Not everyone, however, is as convinced.

Euroferries Ltd, the company behind the proposed passenger service, says although the service will start in the next few months, it is currently unwilling to provide any solid details about it.

If the name Euroferries is familiar, it could be because it has had a number of aborted attempts to start a ferry service from Kent over the years.

It first dipped its toe into our coastal waters in 2006 with a proposal for a service between Dover and Calais.

Despite plenty of promises, nothing emerged. Then it went public with plans to, instead, operate between Ramsgate and Boulogne.

Again, it spoke of fast services and whipped up interest only for nothing to emerge.

Now, in 2014, it is clearly looking to make a splash again – confirming this week to KoS it still plans to launch a high-speed crossing while also creating headlines by agreeing a six-figure sponsorship with Championship football club Millwall.

The sponsor deal – which will see the firm's

name on club shirts – is designed to promote a new coach service, linking Ramsgate to London, via Canterbury, Whitstable and Medway.

So far, however, no service is in operation. It had originally claimed the service would launch last summer to link in with the Ramsgate ferry service. A website for that also now promises a 2014 launch.

Club officials at Millwall refused to comment on the deal when contacted. The new season kicks-off in two weeks.

So just who is behind Euroferries and just exactly what, given the recent history, can we expect to see become a reality?

The truth is a little hard to come by.

A spokesperson for the company – who works for a Sussex-based PR firm – would not elaborate on its plans. Simply telling KoS: "At the moment, there are very few details I can give you. What I can tell you is that we will be launching the new ferry service before the end of 2014."

One of the company's directors is Adrian Gillan, who has the company registered to an address in West Wickham, near Bromley.

Despite repeated attempts to contact him, he evaded our calls.

Adds the spokesman: "They are elusive, but I work with them all, the web guys, the directors, so I never have trouble getting hold of them."

"They don't want to speak to all and sundry as they're busy, out getting coaches, out getting ferries and doing the real work."



**FERRY NICE:**

The sort of ferry Euroferries want to run and (above right), Ramsgate hopes for the best

"When this ferry and coach service gets going, they are going to be absolutely massive. But the only way we will convince people is when they see the ferry.

"They won't listen until then. There's a great webcam at Ramsgate port, so people can use that to watch when the ferry comes in, which will be in the last quarter of this year.

"People can go and watch it, it's going to be on the TV, and we'll have it in the papers, everyone will be there when this launches, it'll be huge.

"The directors are all out at the moment, looking for a vessel we can use for the launch. Until its all finalised the directors aren't going to be able to talk to anyone."

But they do put out big statements, which is what draws such attention to them.

Should Millwall fans, for example, be anxious if the deal signed will actually bear fruit?

"The coach service hasn't launched," the spokesman admitted, "but it will be launching really soon.

"We already have the coaches. We've just got things like the timetables to get sorted out and finalised. This is going to be a huge new service and we're really looking forward to the partnership we have with Millwall."

As ever, with Euroferries, the best advice may be to believe it, when you see it.

Thanet District Council is aware of the plans for

Ramsgate and has held a series of discussions with the firm about it.

Mike Harrison, a Labour councillor, and the Thanet council cabinet member with responsibility for the port, said: "Discussions have been ongoing with Euroferries although currently nothing has been finalised with them about when they might start operating."

The company has also said that, currently, its directors are busy working hard to secure a new boat to help launch the service. Euroferries is in discussion with the boatbuilder, Austal, which is based in Australia.

But getting a vessel has proved problematic in the past. During its last attempted foray into the ferry market from Ramsgate, Euroferries announced it had secured a newly built, state of the art trimaran boat – a boat with three hull segments, designed for speed and stability – from Austal. Delivery, it said, was a matter of only months away.

Yet the boat never arrived, and when KoS spoke to Austal, its UK spokesman told us: "Euroferries have had discussions with us, but it's at an extremely early stage right now. Nothing has been ordered with us yet."

One shipping industry expert told us more bluntly: "Euroferries talk a good game, but no one in the industry has ever seen a penny from them. They have never bought anything, they just seem



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to talk about it, doing nothing but holding endless discussions with ports and shipmakers. If they want to be taken seriously, they need to actually walk the walk too.”

And it isn't just the industry which has grown to be cynical about the ferry company.

Cllr Harrison is circumspect about whether this time, Euroferries really will start operating.

Despite this lack of confidence, Euroferries is bullish about its first boat setting sail from Ramsgate port. The spokesman adding: “The problems we got into last time we tried to launch the service, we aren't going to get into this time. This time it's going to happen and the people who don't believe us – watch this space.”

Certainly it has created lively discussion on internet forums with little information to glean amid the big promises being made.

The Euroferries spokesman added: “You can still see nonsense about Euroferries on the internet and it doesn't matter what we say, people will still be cynical about the company and say it's not going to happen. Last time, Euroferries just couldn't get the vessel. It isn't an easy thing to buy a ship, and last time it fell through at the last moment.”

“But in reality, last time's plan never actually went away. It just ended up taking longer to come to fruition because of the problems we had. This time it will launch and Euroferries is going to get it all right.”

The issue is particularly sensitive in Thanet, where the promise of jobs



and a longed-for revival in the fortunes of the port are always craved.

Jane Wenham-Jones, an author and local resident who remembered how hopeful she was the first time around, said: “Let us just say that while I would be thrilled to see a passenger ferry service running between Ramsgate and Boulogne and would

love to be on the very first sailing out of here, I am not holding my breath.”

“Last time, it went on and on and on with endless promises that never came to anything, so I am sceptical. I'd be happy to be wrong though.”

The chairman of the Ramsgate Business Community Association – which promotes the area as open for

“ I'm one of life's optimists, so even though they have failed to deliver before, they may manage it this time. If it comes off, then great. If it doesn't, then it's just another company we've spoken to which hasn't worked out. ”

**Cllr Mike Harrison,**  
On the Euroferries proposal



business – says it would welcome any new operator at the port.

Brian Unwin said: “A new ferry would add to the town. It would bring footfall to the area, and help businesses, which is what we need in Thanet.”

“When Transeuropa went into administration it was a real loss to the area. Fewer tourists were coming to

Thanet and we had less connectivity with the rest of Europe which meant we lost business as a result. We also had the added blow of losing millions of pounds which the council had used to prop the ailing ferry company up.”

Nicky Gardner, editor of Hidden Europe magazine, and an expert in European ferry travel, told KoS that ferry services between Kent and Europe are weak, and more links were needed.

She said: “There's a real need for cross-Channel ferry links, both for Kent and for Britain's wider economy, so I would be pleased to see it happen. But we have seen Euroferries repeatedly fail to deliver, so I'm doubtful they will get this route together.”

“They are, as a company, quite hilarious to deal with. As a travel writer, I have spoken with them in the past, and they've been immensely unhelpful and its directors are incredible difficult to get hold of. Based on past form, I'd be deeply sceptical about the company, and I would counsel great caution for anyone thinking of buying a ticket. Make sure they actually have a ferry first.”

In September 2013, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) upheld a complaint against Euroferries for misrepresenting its service by stating that it was operating and taking bookings, when in fact it had never set sail. According to the ASA judgement, it was unable to ever get in touch with the company.

Concludes Thanet council's Mike Harrison: “I'm one of life's optimists, so even though they have failed to deliver before, they may manage it this time. If it comes off, then great. If it doesn't, then it's just another company we've spoken to which hasn't worked out.”

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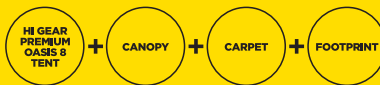
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# Who's who in the soaring saga of Manston Airport?

**I**T IS the saga which seems destined to continue throughout the summer – just what is to happen with the site of Manston Airport?

While it may appear to be a debate confined only to the east of the county, the ramifications of the final outcome will have an impact on the county as a whole.

After all, as one of few airport sites in the county, it has long been touted as a key cog in reviving Thanet – one of the county's most deprived areas, where unemployment rates are high.

Make it a success, and it would ease some of the additional funding which is regularly ploughed into the area on both a county and national level by layers of government.

So just what is the latest situation, and who have emerged as the key players over the future of the site?

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Once just farmland, work began on constructing a makeshift airfield on the site back during the First World War and it swiftly became a key military facility.

Heavily bombed during the Second World War – where it was also used as a base for Barnes Wallis' famous 'bouncing bomb' tests at Reculver, which would ultimately lead to the raids on German dams which would be immortalised in the film *Dambusters* – it went on to be used by the US as a base during the Cold War of the 1950s.

It remained a Ministry of Defence (MoD) site until 1989 when it moved into private ownership.

Since then, repeated efforts and owners have attempted to construct a thriving industry. Passenger and freight services have come and gone, and its use and possible expansion a regular topic of local debate.

After some 18 months seeking a new buyer, the New Zealand firm Infratil finally sold the airport to businesswoman Ann Gloag for the token sum of £1 and around £300,000 in debts in November 2013.

It had been hoped she would strike deals with Ryanair and BA which would revive its fortunes. Both fell through and she took the decision to close the airport. Its doors closed in May. Around 150 staff lost their jobs.

## LATEST DEVELOPMENTS...

This week there appeared to be fresh hopes it could still be saved by investors keen to re-open it.

As Thanet District Council (TDC) continues to examine the strengths and weaknesses of serving a compulsory purchase order (CPO) on the site, so talks continue in tandem with US investment RiverOak about assuming control should a deal be struck.

The issue of public funds being used on the airport – in any capacity – is a highly sensitive one however. It is thought the conditions would ensure



The Thanet airport may have closed but the fight to save it continues. **Maria Chiorando** looks at Manston's past and at the key players in its potential future...

RiverOak picking up all the costs involved.

Earlier in the week, a petition was handed in to Number 10 Downing Street calling for steps to be taken to save the airport.

Meanwhile, rumours and counter-rumours continue to circulate on a daily basis, most prominent of all the on-going fears the site will simply be turned into housing.

## NAME:

**Ann Gloag**

## POSITION:

**Current owner of Manston Airport**

At the centre of the saga is airport owner and business magnate Ann Gloag.

Yet the elusive Scot is about as shy of the limelight as she is of publicly giving any hint as to her thinking on the future of Manston.

Since she bought the site – officially taking ownership on November 29, 2013 – her office appears to be under orders to protect her at all costs.

She has never spoken publicly about Manston, only issuing some comments via her spokeswoman at the time of the purchase.

Her reputation, however, will never be the same again in Kent.

The winner of several humanitarian awards, it's difficult to argue against her charity work, but despite this, she is considered by

many to be the villain of this piece.

And it's easy to see how the enigmatic tycoon has created enemies. With an apparently ruthless nature, it seems as though nothing will stand between her and her ambition. Sentiment, it would seem, plays little part in her thought process.

Born in Scotland in 1942, she originally worked as a nurse for 20 years, until setting up a bus travel company, with her brother and then husband. Stagecoach would go on to be one of the travel industry's great success stories.

When her marriage broke down, her husband sold back his share in the company, and set up his own company, offering certain routes. Gloag launched a rival service on the routes, waging a price war and eventually forcing her former husband out of business by offering free rides on her routes.

When Stagecoach floated on the stock exchange in 1993, it was valued at £134 million, making a millionairess out of the former nurse, who is now the owner of two Scottish castles.

Despite her immense wealth,



her life has had its share of tragedy. In 1999, her son Jonathan was found dead in woodland in Perthshire, believed to have taken his own life. He was just 28.

Her ex-husband died in a car crash in 2007.

Ms Gloag is now in her 70s, and seems as determined as ever to expand her business empire.

Optimism surrounded Mrs Gloag's purchase of Manston, with hopes that perhaps this formidable character could be the one to make a success of the business.

As the airfield is stripped, and every asset, fitting and fixture auctioned off, it seems as though she may be the one to finally force it in to the grave.

## NAME:

Iris Johnston

## POSITION:

Labour leader of  
Thanet District  
Council



IRIS Johnston is the Labour leader of Thanet District Council – a local authority which swings by the smallest margin between Conservatives and Labour.

She replaced former leader Clive Hart who stepped down in May.

Her ascent to the leadership coincided with the week Manston closed its doors.

Thrust straight into the debate she has been a vocal supporter of the airport.

She explained: "Having an airport is essential to the footprint of Thanet."

She's also walking a very delicate political line. Should she commit any public money to saving a so-far commercially unviable airport she risks political outrage from opponents, should it not become a success.

If she does not give the nod to a CPO, she faces being labelled the woman who gave up on Manston.

An independent financial viability report

has been commissioned on the site, the results of which are being kept a closely guarded secret.

Cllr Johnston hinted, however: "The majority of the report is not as negative as people think."

"My first reading of it suggests that it sees a future for Manston."

There have been talks between Ms Gloag and Cllr Johnston on several occasions, very little about which is known, as the airport owner insists on confidentiality.

At a public meeting on July 19, Cllr Johnston did reveal that the most recent meeting they had had, on July 4, had been "disappointing".

## NAME:

Tony Freudmann

## POSITION:

Spokesman for US  
investment firm  
RiverOak



IT IS just possible, Tony Freudmann could become the most significant figure in this whole saga. And if you recognise his name, well, he'd been linked with Manston for many years.

For now, though, he is simply seen as 'spokesman' for US investment firm RiverOak.

RiverOak Investment Corporation, based in Connecticut, has interests in real estate as well as a finger in the aviation pie.

It runs a cargo hub in Texas, a project not unlike Manston Airport could be, if used as a freight airport.

It has also stated an interest in European investment, and to this end, made three unsuccessful bids for Manston. The last apparently being for £7m – the asking price – just hours before the airport shut.

While those directly involved in the CPO bid have enthusiastically backed his expertise, some have questioned his suitability to play an active role as Manston moves forward, due to his previous involvement with the airport.

He was previously a director with Wiggins Group plc, which bought the site from the Ministry of Defence in March 1989.

He explained to KoS: "I was responsible for overseeing the process of turning the military base into a commercial airport."

"The next major development came in 2005, when PJ McGoldrick wanted the airport company to invest in his airline, EU Jet [a low cost airline based in Shannon]."

"Some board members decided to go for it, but some of us had reservations, as Manston was starting to develop as a cargo hub. However, they did invest, and those of my team who did not support the investment were offered a very generous severance package and left."

"I had some contact with Infratil over the years, but it never came to anything. I have had some contact with Ann Gloag and other previous investors but what passed between us is confidential."

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## MANSTON AIRPORT: THE KEY PLAYERS...

### NAME:

**Keith Churcher**

### POSITION:

**Spokesman for Save Manston Airport (SMA)**

THE spokesman for the Save Manston Airport (SMA) group joined the campaign after a lifelong interest in planes.

While working on another project, involving the housing of Concorde, he researched Manston, which, he claims, would have been an ideal place.

"When I started to make enquiries, I found out it was closing.

"It had always been an airport that was close to my heart, so I started the petition, got in touch with group founder, Dan Light, and said I'd like to help out with the cause."

The problem he claims has been "bad management".

He told KoS: "Someone needs to take over Manston, and run it properly.

"What a lot of people don't realise is that Manston is a slow burner, money-wise.

"It's not going to make a huge amount of money in the second or third year.

"It's about proper management, and increasing the facility as we go."

The campaign has continued to gather momentum; several hundred people attended the last public meeting on July 19,



but the high point was a march held earlier in July, which was attended by 1,200 people.

The fear among the pro-Manston lobby is that the land will be developed as housing. They believe that is how Mrs Gloag will reap the most profit from the site.

The group are keen supporters of the CPO proposal, with Mr Churcher claiming it is the only way the site will stay as an airfield.

He said: "RiverOak are not the only investors on the table. They do seem like a good fit, and certainly appear to be committed.

"But until money has changed hands, then it's still open for a second, third, even fourth investor to step up.

"RiverOak are the only ones who have made their interest public."

### NAME:

**Paul Carter**

### POSITION:

**Leader Kent County Council**

PAUL Carter has been the Conservative leader of Kent County Council since October 2005 and a man only too aware of the political sensitivities around Manston.

Certainly there is no denying the county council has not been supportive of the airport in the past. But having seen public funds consumed in previous failures, and the purse strings tighter than ever, its support going forward may be more vocal than financial.

The pro-Manston contingent claim his view recently has been inconsistent – an allegation he strongly denies.

Following a council meeting on July 17, in which he maintained that KCC will support TDC should it be deemed the right thing to do, he insists he has kept that position.

He told KoS: "I have always been very consistent, but we at Kent County Council will do all we can to support the best solution that delivers the best outcome in terms of job opportunities for east Kent.

"I have never wavered from that standpoint. We will help any proposition that offers jobs, as an airport or anything else."

He says KCC will support the CPO bid,



should the results of the independent financial viability report be promising.

There is another caveat.

He explains: "Thanet District Council must also ask for expressions of interest."

In short, he would appear to need a little convincing that RiverOak is the solution to all the airport's woes.

"I met with RiverOak," he says. "It wasn't a great meeting. They were not forthcoming in their business proposal, they did not have a credible business plan, or present any evidence to suggest all the finance is in place."

So would KCC dig into its pockets again?

"Let's see what the study says," he says.

"We don't want another owner who doesn't have the muscle for success, we don't want to end up where we started.

"My track record in supporting east Kent has been second to none, and KCC's door is open to receive any exciting proposition."

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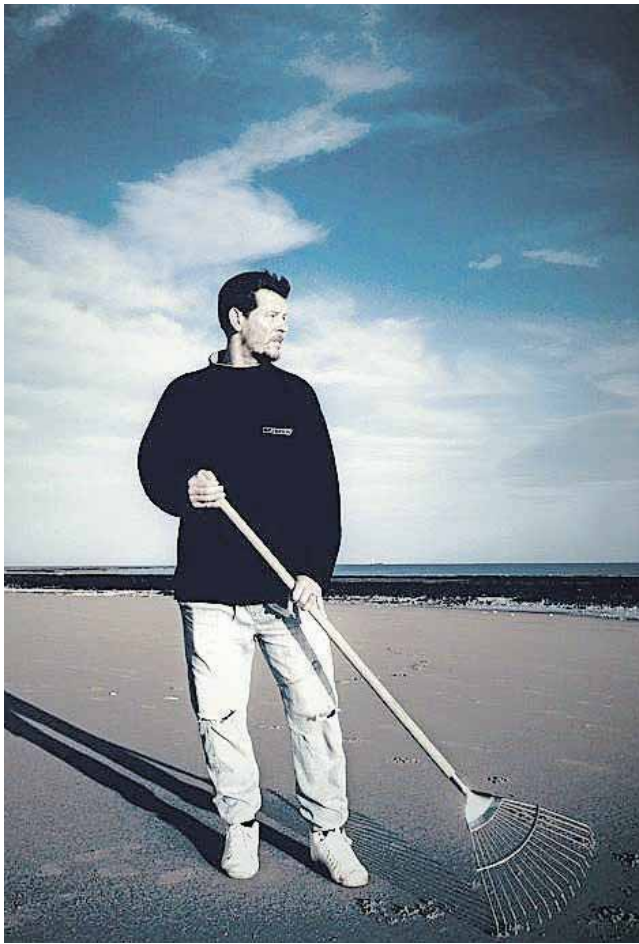
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**TIME AND TIDE:** Broadstairs's Ross Andrews gets ready to create new art



# Artist hopes to rake it in with business idea

Sand art offers commercial possibilities for Thanet man, writes **Chris Murphy**

**I**T IS often difficult to think how the natural beauty of some of our beaches can be bettered. But one artist has hatched upon a way which injects a remarkable new twist on some of our coastal landscapes.

By engraving designs onto the wet sands, he has been able to create some astonishing designs.

And now Ross Andrews has developed a way to capitalise on his talents – by offering major brands the opportunity to be in on the picture... at least until the tide comes in.

Not that the business side was his original motive.

He said: "I saw a drawing in the sands being done on a Bollywood movie I was working on a couple of

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years ago here in Kent and knew I could do that. I did it for fun at first but realised there may be people who would commission some of my work."

Companies wanting an iconic image of their logo splashed across large areas of beach now have somewhere to go.

And Mr Andrews, who also runs a beach café and film production company, is the go-to man for all kinds of beach art.

The 41-year-old from Broadstairs said: "I have always been pretty artistic. I grew up on the Kent coast and absolutely love it here.

"The sand on our beaches is ideal for this sort of work, but I have to be careful of tide times. The last thing I need is for it to all be washed away be-

fore the photography is finished. But sometimes that is exactly what I am after. It adds to the drama of the work – the sea just starting to lap against the design.

"I love the fact it all disappears almost immediately. I love that race against time and the tide.

"People are wonderful and they always walk around when I am working – some of the designs are pretty huge, but they respect what I am doing."

He started up Sand Attraction to promote his artwork.

He said: "I love working with sand – it is so pliable and the Kent sands are just perfect for what I do with it.

"I need it to hold just the right amount of moisture and temperature for it to hold its shape."

Advertisers and travel magazines have hired him so far, along with some companies keen to make a splash.

Mr Andrews said: "I am also approached by families to create something novel for portrait backgrounds.

"Using the designs as backgrounds for weddings is also popular. It is just something a little different than some of the more usual pictures you have of a bride and groom."

He added: "I did one at Botany Bay in Broadstairs to promote Thanet's amazing coastline with seven Blue Flag beaches. It read #loveourbeaches to promote the Twitter tag.

"Other areas I used a lot include Margate and Ramsgate."

■ To see more of Ross Andrews's work, visit [www.sandattraction.co.uk](http://www.sandattraction.co.uk).



**SHIFTING CANVAS:** Ross creates huge artworks on Thanet's beaches

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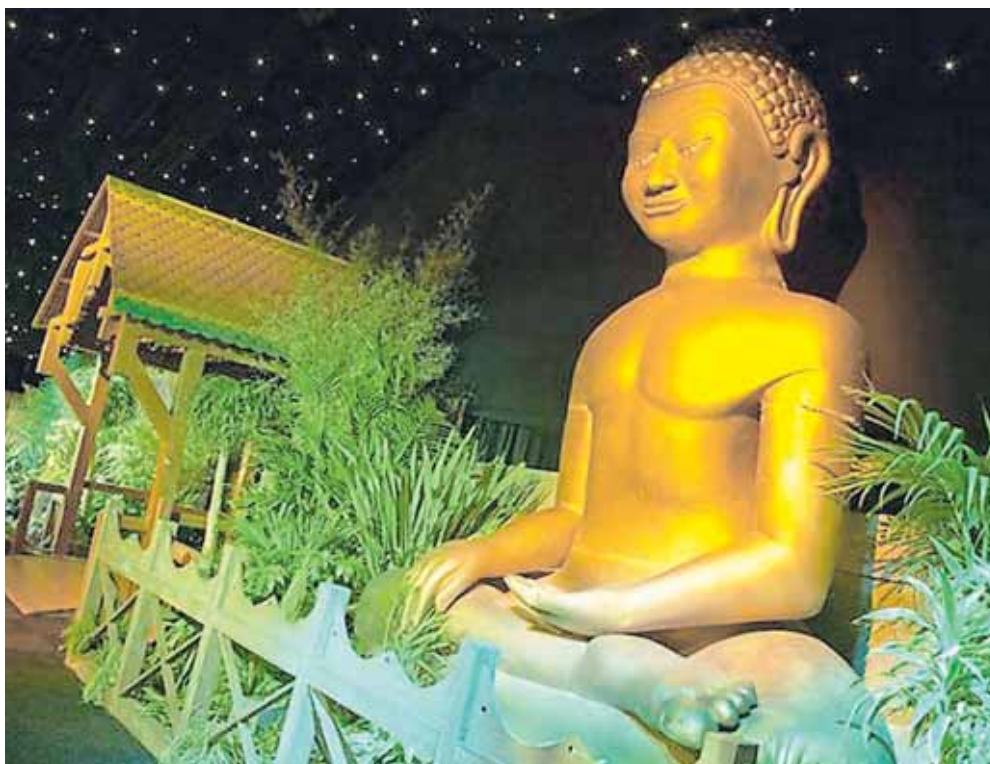
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We may have spent another week with sweltering temperatures, but for many the focus is firmly fixed



**FESTIVE FUN FOR FIRMS:** Evidence suggests more businesses are prepared to spend on rewarding their staff with Christmas parties. Themes vary from the traditional to those including 'One

# Office parties back on Christmas

**W**HEN recession hit the country a few years ago, lavish Christmas office parties fell down the list of priorities for most companies.

Budgets were slashed and parties were cancelled as belts were tightened.

But now evidence is suggesting firms are rekindling the seasonal spirit. After all, celebrations reward staff in tough times, raise morale and make good business sense in the long run.

Best Parties Ever, one of the biggest national events organisers in the UK, has confirmed corporate bookings for its themed parties were up 20 per cent for Christmas 2013 and it is already selling tickets for Christmas 2014.

With events all over the country, in Kent the company uses the Kent County Showground site at Detling, near Maidstone – best known as the home of the Kent County Show.

Building an enormous marquee for most of December, it holds both shared parties, where several smaller businesses can book tables alongside others, or offers exclusive hire.

This year's theme, 'One Night In Bangkok', will take revellers on a journey through the myths and magic of the Far East, offering entertainment including acrobats, fire performers and aerial dancers before guests enter the main dining area, which will feature palm trees and a giant Buddha statue.

It might not be the most festive of themes but it's exotic and memorable.

With up to 1,200 guests each night and after dinner entertainment including dodgems, a casino and dancing until midnight, it beats most office parties of soggy sandwiches down at the Dog & Duck.

Formed in 1999, what Best Parties Ever is noticing is not only that firms are becoming more willing to splash the cash on their staff at Christmas but the amount they are expecting to spend is also increasing year on year.

Tim Stevens, Christmas party guru and man-

aging director of Best Parties Ever, said: "These figures definitely confirm that there is a new confidence in the corporate sector. It's gratifying too to see that not only are more businesses rewarding their staff for their hard work by treating them to a party, but they're also increasing their spend on the night on things like drinks and entertainment."

Mr Stevens reports that, as usual, corporate bookings started in January for this year's parties. He said: "Our venues are available for mixed use – perfect for SME's [small to medium enterprises] or larger firms perhaps wanting to hold departmental parties – or exclusive use for large corporates who want a spectacular themed event with plenty of entertainment, but who don't want the worry and effort of trying to organise it themselves."

Indeed, some of the glowing testimonials on its website are from large corporations including PepsiCo UK and Sainsbury's.

Best Parties Ever's 2014 party season at Kent County Showground runs from December 3 to December 20, with prices starting at £37.50 per head, rising to £63. The price includes a four-course dinner and full event management with on-site security and car parking. There is even a 'survivor's breakfast' at midnight for those who have lasted that long.

In a hard economic climate it could seem improper for companies to spend on a big-ticket party at the end of a year that could have seen budget cuts, job losses and pay freezes. But evidence suggests it's more important than ever to boost staff morale and provide a welcome treat for stressed employees. It's a good way of recognising and rewarding hard work.

A big name in Christmas parties in Kent is businessman Paul Bishop from UK Mobile Bars Ltd, based near Canterbury. Each year his company builds a fully floored and heated marquee in the grounds of the Faversham Showground and hosts a series of traditionally-themed Christmas balls for up to 350 people.

Mr Bishop said: "We created the Monster Christmas Ball events at the height of the recession. This will be its fifth year and it's been quite interesting to see year on year that companies are spending more money. Last year we definitely saw evidence of that."

"The number of bookings we had last year where the party was totally funded by the company, rather than the staff having to pay towards it – that increased. And also the willingness of the employer to spend at the event increased. For example, by providing staff with an element of pre-paid drinks or running a tab. It's probably around a 15 per cent increase."

"It's certainly something that's on the up. I think it does evidence the fact that companies are feeling a bit more generous and more confident. They tend to treat parties as a reward mechanism for staff. They like to treat them to a big annual night out and anything they can do to make the staff feel better is good for them in the long run. They get the benefit of the feel-good factor."

The basic Monster Christmas Ball package, which costs £49.50 per person, includes a traditional Christmas dinner, a bar, a live band and DJ, but big firms which opt to hire the venue exclusively often add to the night's entertainment and personalise the experience.

What is surprising is that businesses are thinking ahead to such an extent that tickets

are already being sold for this December.

"We've been taking bookings for months," said Mr Bishop. "Because the event only runs on selected nights in December, it's something which people book quite early to guarantee themselves a date. Really, from the moment that last year's event closed – which was the weekend before Christmas – we were taking bookings for this year."

"The peak booking time starts at July but it's always Christmas here for us."

One of the many Kent firms to take advantage of the convenience of the Monster Christmas Ball event is The Simply Group, an outdoor and leisure business in Faversham.

Chief executive Gerrard Dennis said it's a way of thanking his staff.

He said: "It's something we've done for many years now as a thank you to the staff. With 48 full time staff it's not cheap but it's just something you budget for. It wouldn't be fair to take it away because times are tougher; staff haven't worked less hard – in fact they've worked harder. Any business is only as good as its staff."

"The best thing about these things is that you pay and just turn up on the night. All the planning is done for you and you can just relax and let your hair down."

But a Christmas party is just one event. Mr Dennis tries to plan several social events throughout the year for his staff.

"It's a good way of getting people from different parts of the company to mingle and it's good for morale," he said. "It's all just team-building if you think about it."

A much more traditional option is local hotels and venues which are known for hosting weddings and conferences throughout the year. Hundreds of venues including Port Lympne Mansion, Brands Hatch and Leeds Castle all offer corporate events in November and December. But a certain level of grandeur is still expected, even if they don't provide the kind of theatrics the big party companies do.

**“It's a good way of getting people from different parts of the company to mingle and it's good for morale. It's all just team-building...”**

**Gerrard Dennis,**  
Chief executive of The Simply Group

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Week ending July 27, 2014 **25**





**WHICH CAME FIRST?:** Many families are keeping chickens and enjoying the benefits of home-sourced, fresh eggs. Most chicken-keepers start with hybrid hens, that have been developed to lay

**W**ALK through quiet streets across the county and amid the dog barks and children's shouts, there is a new noise in town.

And it is the sound of people trying to secure a slice of the good life, to return to self-sufficiency. Because the sound is the gentle clucking of chickens.

We may, it seems, be changing from a nation of shopkeepers to a nation of chicken keepers.

It seems a blend of celebrity chefs and a global health scare appears to be motivating more and more of us to turn a part of our gardens into a chicken coop.

Faversham's Lorna Luckhurst is secretary of the Kent Poultry Club.

She explains: "I think we're seeing a real return to people being more self-sufficient. That includes people wanting to grow their own vegetables as well as keep their own chickens for eggs."

"Celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall have definitely inspired people [with TV shows urging a return to growing your own food], and I think the supposed avian flu outbreak could also be part of it – people want to be able to rely on themselves a bit more."

"This county has such a large rural community, and now, from our point of view, chicken-keeping has started to take hold – everyone seems to want to try it."

Keeping chickens has become something of a hobby for many. With the ideal chicken being low maintenance, and a good layer.

As to how much it will cost you, well, the price range can vary as much as the number, size and colour of eggs you can expect any one hen to lay over a lifetime.

There are more than 20 commonly kept varieties of chickens. If you want to rehome an ex-commercial hen, then they can often be free – but in need of some tender loving care which isn't necessarily cheap.

Or you can spend hundreds of pounds for a more exotic breed.

Most experts would recommend the novice starts with a basic hybrid hen.

Such is the interest in the past-time, it's even spawned its own specialist magazine.

Simon McEwan is editor of *Your Chickens* magazine. He says readers are flocking to his publication as the hobby grows.

He said: "Starting with three or four hybrid hens is a good idea."

"You should buy them when they're around

# More and more families are going cock-a-hoop over keeping chickens

Whether its grabbing the good life or returning to self-sufficiency, many people are getting eggs-cited by keeping hens. **Maria Chiorando** reports...

18–22 weeks old, which means they are ready to start laying.

"Hybrids have been specifically developed to lay lots of eggs and will be friendly and docile."

Sophie Farrington runs Chookie's Farm in Deal. She is seeing a definite boom in people coming to her to buy chickens and get advice.

She explains: "Some of the ornamental breeds are harder to look after. I always recommend beginners choose hybrids."

"People are sometimes put off because they think all hybrids are classic brown hens, but you can get them in many different colours."

"Before getting hens, I would recommend doing your research, going to see someone who has them, asking questions about them."

"I would recommend that you start off with two or three. Three is better really, because they

are social animals, and if something happens to one of them, you still have a pair."

"Sometimes people just want one chicken but I would never recommend that. I also wouldn't recommend introducing a single chicken to an established group."

"I have seen people try that before, and it often ends with the single chicken becoming very nervous and not very well. It's not worth it."

All experts would recommend that you go to a reputable breeder and see your hens before you buy them.

Sophie James from Canterbury has kept chickens for several years.

"After we moved here, we had garden space, so we wanted to try keeping chickens, mainly for the eggs," she explained.

"We started with three hybrids, as we were told they were the best layers. Now we have a mix of hybrids and ornamental birds."

"We get the hybrids from one dealer, then the ornamental ones have come from all over."

For many, however, there's another option. Rehoming hens who have had a tough start to life. Charities like The British Hen Welfare Trust take commercial laying chickens destined for slaughter, and pair them with people looking for hens.

People can register online, then when chickens become available, they are distributed to those on the waiting list.

It's become one of the most popular ways to

acquire hens, with owners relishing the prospects of taking chickens in a sorry state, and seeing them return to full health.

While battery farming is illegal in the UK, conditions for commercial laying hens can still be tough, especially for those confined to barns.

Offering a home to an ex-commercial hen can pay off though; once these chickens have settled down, they are often very good layers, as well as being friendly and sociable.

Spokesman for the trust is Marie Tippet. She explains: "We are finding more and more people are choosing to have hens as pets."

"People are really seeing the benefits apart from just the eggs. They are individuals, with separate and very endearing characters and personalities."

"Ex-commercial hens require no specialist knowledge to look after. They are fully vaccinated, and the team here is extremely knowledgeable about hen health."

"There are generally no behavioural issues to worry about – there may be a bit of pecking, and sometimes the hens look a bit scruffy with missing or loose feathers, but once they are in a new good home, they soon flourish."

"I would recommend anyone gives a home to an ex-commercial hen."

When it comes to housing chickens, as a general rule, a minimum outside space for three chickens is 3.6m x 4.8m. Oh, and be wary of foxes.

**“ This county has such a large rural community... and chicken keeping has started to take hold – everyone seems to want to try it ”**

**Lorna Luckhurst,**  
Kent Poultry Club





lots of eggs and will be friendly and docile.

“ We are finding more and more people are choosing to have hens as pets. People are really seeing the benefits apart from just the eggs ”

**Marie Tippet,**  
The British Hen Welfare Trust

They remain chickens' most feared foe and with their numbers growing, more and more chicken-keepers are finding their coops have been raided and their hens killed.

Your Chickens editor Simon McEwan adds: "You may opt to enclose your hens in a run; you should make it fox-proof by burying 1.8m fences at least 30cm into the ground or use electric fencing.

"If you're a city dweller you may have less space; arks which attach to hen houses are a good idea since they are on wheels and can be moved to fresh grass."

Your budget will dictate the quality of coop, with prices ranging from around £80 to all the way up to £1,000-plus.

Miss Farrington from Chookie's Farm, says: "Hen houses come in both wood and plastic, and it is personal choice as to which is better, although many people find that plastic is easier to clean than wood.

"Other basics are food and drink dispensers."

Keeper Mrs James says: "We have gone through a couple of hen houses. The most important thing is that it has to be fox-proof.

"Their house also needs to be ventilated and weatherproof with perches and nest boxes."

But while it is certainly not a cheap past-time, it is extremely satisfying.

Mrs Tippet from the British Hen Welfare Trust explains: "Keeping chickens is not particularly expensive. Of course, there are set-up costs, the main one is the chickens' home.

"As with everything else, the more you can afford to invest, the better."

It's a trend that seems to be growing, with more and more people showing interest.

Explains Mrs Luckhurst: "It's great to see people learn about chickens. When we were at the Kent County Show, we had lots of children come into our tent.

"They were amazed to see eggs hatching, and didn't know the difference between hatching eggs and eggs in a box at the supermarket."

# Growing your own tastes great and saves cash

AS part of the growing interest in self-sufficiency, people are not only keeping hens for eggs, but also turning their skills to more green-fingered pursuits.

Growing your own fruit and vegetables is becoming increasingly common, with waiting lists for allotment spaces on the rise.

And those who are lucky

enough to have enough garden space are encouraged to use it, or even subscribe to schemes where keen gardeners can work the private land with food produced split with the owners.

Serena Shirley is a director of Victoriana Nursery Gardens in the village of Challock, near Ashford.

She said: "A lot more people are interested in producing their own

food right now.

"We have definitely seen a big increase in people buying young vegetable plants rather than seeds.

"There are so many reasons to grow your own fruit and veg.

"There are more varieties of various foods that you can choose from.

"Homegrown food also tastes a lot better than anything you will buy in the shops.

"People also find that they can save money going homegrown."

It is believed the trend has been fuelled both by a desire to return to a more self-sufficient life-style, and to combat increasing prices for foods. There has also been growing concerns over the issue of food miles, with many products being imported from around the world at an environment cost.



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# Parents of Dover ferry plunge man and the fight for cameras on ships

Marianne and Bob Fearnside's 30-year-old son Richard boarded a ferry at Calais with his fiancée – he has not been seen since. **Sarah Linney** talks to the couple about their campaign to introduce CCTV.



**DENIED AN INQUEST:** Marianne Fearnside

**F**OR more than a year now, Marianne and Bob Fearnside have been waiting for their son to come home from holiday.

Richard, 30, was due back from a break in France with his fiancée to celebrate his birthday on May 21 last year. But he never arrived.

His fiancée got off the 11pm ferry from Calais to Dover alone to tell the couple that Richard, who was from Canterbury, had disappeared. He had gone on deck for a cigarette and had never come back.

And that is all they know, and probably ever will know, of their son's death. His body has never been found.

Now the grieving couple have collected almost 100,000 signatures on a petition asking P&O to install CCTV cameras on deck on board its ferries to prevent another family from suffering the agony of not knowing what has happened to a loved one.

But their campaign was dealt a fresh blow this week when the UK Chamber of Shipping said it would not be making industry-wide changes to the rules on passenger safety on ferries.

"About half an hour from Dover, Richard left his fiancée downstairs with his bag and said he was going on deck for a cigarette, and that was all we knew," Mrs Fearnside told KoS.

"She is deeply traumatised.

"We couldn't believe he would have disappeared completely – we were expecting him to turn up.

"But the tides are so rough, so extreme, we were told that he would probably never be found."

The couple, who live in Whitstable, started the petition after being told an inquest could not be held into their son's death because of a lack of information over his fate.

"We don't know what happened. He could have slipped, he could have fallen, he could have been pushed, he could have jumped – we don't know. On deck is a dangerous place," Mrs Fearnside said.

"We know Richard wasn't very well, but we also know he was very tired – he had been driving for 14 hours and I don't think he had slept much the night before. We could have had a chance of knowing if he had chosen to jump, or slipped and fallen.

"If there had been a CCTV camera on the deck, it could have been checked as soon as Richard was reported missing.

"It would have told us where to start the search and it may have helped the search and rescue teams find him.

"The last sighting we have of Richard is from a CCTV camera next to the dutyfree shop. CCTV is there to protect the goods, but they don't put any on deck to protect the passengers."

**“If there had been a CCTV camera on the deck, it could have been checked as soon as Richard was reported missing”**

**Marianne Fearnside,**  
Petitioning for CCTV on P&O ferry decks

The couple's petition calls for all P&O passenger ferry decks to be protected by CCTV cameras and Mrs Fearnside says she also wants them to have a man-overboard system, where an alarm sounds if someone falls over the rail, and the boat can stop to allow crews to try to rescue the individual.

She drew parallels with the recommendation by the Health and Safety Executive in 1992, that British Rail should introduce measures to prevent passengers unlocking train doors inadvertently while the train was moving.

In a letter to Mrs Fearnside in February, P&O's chief executive, Helen Deeble, said she had referred the matter to industry association the UK Chamber of Shipping (which represents most of the country's ferry companies and cruise lines) so it could investigate a variety of options.

"We have done this to ensure a rigorous analysis is undertaken by industry experts on behalf of the entire industry," the letter said.

"If the rules are to change, or new systems are to be introduced, then logically they should be universal and apply to all ferries and other passenger ships using UK ports.

"We are not a faceless organisation but consist of individual human beings, many being professional seafarers, who are focused on the safety of our customers and staff.

"While incidents like this are extremely rare, we take the matter very seriously, recognising the threat to life of both the individual concerned and our crew, who may have to launch rescue boats in hazardous conditions at great personal risk.

"It is very much in all of our interests to look at practical, realistic and effective ways of preventing man-overboard incidents and we have

## New petition to change rules governing how pets travel on cross-Channel ferries after death of dog

A PETITION has started over the way pets are transported on ferries after the death of a family's dog in a car during a cross-Channel crossing.

They described it as "the worst incident of our lives".

More than 7,000 people have already put their names to the campaign after Merlin the pug died on the 10.45am P&O ferry from Calais to Dover last Friday.

P&O does not allow dogs on deck during crossings for safety and hygiene reasons – but says it carried hundreds of other dogs over the weekend without incident.

Merlin's owner, Kirsty Wallace, described the horror of returning to her car at the end of the crossing to find her pet unconscious – despite being left with the car window open and plenty of water.

With the help of P&O staff and other passengers, her husband tried to resuscitate Merlin, but to no avail.

"It's the worst thing I've ever seen. Our kids were watching as we were trying everything," said Mrs Wallace, who lives in Germany and is

originally from Northumberland.

"After about 20 minutes we realised there was no bringing him back.

"The vet said that by the sounds of it, as he is a black pug, it was more than likely he had retained the heat and overheated.

"Our family is now missing a member. We have three distraught children and my husband and I will always go through the what ifs."

She said she had asked the company if she could sit with or visit Merlin during the crossing and been told no. But the company denies this and says it routinely escorts customers back to their cars to see their pets.

The petition, started by Mrs Wallace's friend Nina Gadsdon, calls on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and environment minister Liz Truss to ask ferry operators to improve animal welfare during crossings.

"It would be an animal rights abuse for a person to leave their pet in their car on land for over an hour, so how can the ferry companies be allowed to make pet-owners do this?" it says.

"We are calling on Defra and Liz Truss to ensure that animal welfare is taken into account by these companies, so more pets are not put through needless suffering.

"The law says that no person shall transport any animal in a way which causes, or is likely to cause injury or unnecessary suffering, to that animal."

The government's own advice leaflet for pet-owners on transporting their animals says that pets are normally expected to stay in vehicles on short ferry crossings and in the Channel Tunnel.

However, the RSPCA said a change in policy was needed.

Spokeswoman Janet Kipling said: "This is a deeply distressing incident and our thoughts are with Merlin's family.

"The RSPCA wrote to a number of ferry companies, including P&O, more than two years ago expressing concern about this problem and urging them to change this policy. We are really concerned to hear that another dog has died and that the policy is still in place.

"Pet-owners should be aware that these are the rules at the moment and only travel if it's cool, which means overnight, early morning or late at night – or even delay their journey altogether."

In a statement, P&O offered the Wallaces its sympathy and said it was reviewing its policy.

It said the car was parked out of the sun on a deck with "excellent" ventilation and a constant flow of fresh air and that temperatures out at sea were much cooler than on the shore.

"We carry more than 50,000 dogs a year between Dover and Calais on a fleet of five ships," spokesman Brian Rees said. "We don't think it wise to have them in the passenger areas on grounds of hygiene, safety – dogs are known to bite people from time to time – and practicality.

"What we are now pondering as a result of this very distressing incident is whether we should continue to accept breeds of dogs that are known to have a fundamental disposition towards respiratory difficulties due to the nature of the way they've been selectively bred. Many airlines refuse to transport certain





**NO CAMERAS ON DECK:** Richard Fearnside disappeared from a P&O ferry from Calais

it will not stop these very infrequent events of persons falling overboard occurring, nor necessarily provide a better outcome in terms of saving lives once such unfortunate events occur.

"Companies also, of course, need to consider their duty of care to crew members involved in recovering someone who has fallen overboard, often in bad weather, which makes the launching of rescue boats arduous to say the least.

"The UK chamber will continue to work with its members and monitor the development of technology going forward.

"We continue to offer sincere condolences to Mr Fearnside's family."

However, Mrs Fearnside said she still wanted to see all passenger ferries introduce CCTV.

"It's just not morally right that they won't do anything," she added.

"If you are contracted to take someone from A to B, I would have thought you would be responsible for their safety, but they are not taking responsibility. Safety measures to prevent the loss of life

**While CCTV could, in some circumstances, provide closure for families, sadly it will not stop very infrequent events of persons falling overboard**

**David Balston**, director of policy at the UK Chamber of Shipping

to date viewed CCTV as not being effective at prevention. However, we remain open to all suggestions and options."

The UK Chamber of Shipping set up a working group of representatives from cruise and ferry companies to look at the options available.

But the group concluded "individual companies should conduct their own risk assessments".

**D**irector of policy David Balston explained: "UK ferry and cruise operators are taking every appropriate and reasonable measure to protect their passengers.

"The use of technical solutions is and will be considered once their effectiveness has been proven and a risk assessment indicates that such measures are warranted.

"There are many other practical measures that already have been taken, such as the design of railings, restricting access to open decks in poor weather, on-board announcements warning passengers of vessel movement, the provision of smoking zones in sheltered areas on decks, improved lighting and non-skid decks.

"While CCTV could, in some circumstances, provide a measure of closure for families, sadly



**TOO HOT:** Pug Merlin died after boarding a ferry to Dover in his family's car at 10.45am

breeds of dogs, notably pugs, bulldogs and other brachycephalic breeds, due to this.

"We are reluctant to stop offering a service to the owners of certain breeds, believing owners are best placed to judge the suitability of conditions when transporting their animals. However, the company is now reviewing its policy."

Pugs have compact breathing passageways, which leaves many prone to breathing difficulties or unable to regulate their temperature efficiently by panting.

"While the loss of this pet is hugely distressing, we had 21 dogs on the same sailing. Across the five ships on Friday we carried 256 dogs," Mr Rees added.

on passenger ferries are woefully inadequate. We have lost our beloved son, and that's a heart-break, but it's important to us that something decent comes out of this. We don't want this to happen to another family.

Canterbury and Whitstable MP Julian Brazier said he supported the campaign wholeheartedly.

"As the father of three boys, I can only imagine what Mr and Mrs Fearnside have been through and are still going through," he said.

"Not knowing what happened to Richard in his final moments before he tragically passed away can only make the situation worse.

"I have previously raised this issue with the Department for Transport and was pleased to hear the UK Chamber of Shipping has set up a working party, which suggests that this matter is being treated with the seriousness it deserves.

"I admire the bravery of the Fearnside family in pushing this campaign when they must still be grieving for their son."

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# Prison garden sanctuary for wildlife and an escape for inmates

For the past few years one Kent prison has been doing sterling work in saving our insects while helping prisoners in the process, as **Caroline Read** reports.

**A**NYONE walking past the large, imposing ragstone walls surrounding Maidstone Prison would be forgiven for being oblivious to the important environmental work going on behind them.

As well as housing some 600 Category C prisoners, many of whom are foreign nationals, staff at the 14-acre town centre prison are involved in a project to create a haven for wildlife.

From just inside the main gates of the prison, which opened in 1819, staff and visitors are welcomed by enormous trailing hanging baskets, which, as well as adding colour to the otherwise ominous surroundings, are also there to attract many species of insect.

Beyond this is an allotment area – consisting of several raised beds made from recycled timber – where prisoners on the gardening team can grow vegetables from seed.

Next is the biodiversity garden, which they call the Gateway. It's an area divided into smaller plots, all planted specifically to attract different species of wildlife from bees and butterflies, to moths and birds.

But the section the prison's community engagement manager Martin Dacey is most excited about is the bumblebee garden. Carefully planned out to replicate an authentic English country garden, the planting scheme provides a variety of nectar-rich plants and flowers specifically to attract some of the country's 25 different species of bumblebee, one of the most endangered garden insects, throughout the season.

"Early spring plants such as comfrey, mahonia and lungwort provide food for the queen bumblebees coming out of hibernation," said Mr Dacey. "And in early summer we have aquilegia, borage, geraniums, poppies – all for the worker bees feeding the nest."

"Later on in the summer we'll have things like buddleia, cornflowers,

foxgloves and lavender to allow the new queens to feed up before hibernation."

Mr Dacey started out at the facility as a prison officer. Helping to plan a wildlife garden is far from what he expected to be doing as part of his role 23 years later, but he is certain it is not only good for conservation but as an enriching activity for the prisoners to be involved with, which, in some cases can help to rehabilitate and prevent reoffending.

"We're a working prison so all prisoners have to work here," he explains.

"To be allowed on the gardens party you have to be assessed as quite low risk, as it's a privileged position."

"We have a group of about 18 prisoners who are working on the garden party at any one time."

"They go out and enjoy the fresh air but they're also learning important skills for life; learning how to grow plants from seed, prepare the soil, use tools, make bird boxes and so on."

During the winter months, when there is less to do in the gardens, the prisoners receive some formal training in horticulture. There are several qualifications available to them and some may even wish to pursue gardening as a career.

"It's all very well saying lock them up and throw away the key," says Mr Dacey, "but we want to do something positive with them while they're here."

**“ Reoffending is a revolving door and if you can equip someone with some new skills, the chances are he can go out and be able to support himself ”**

**Martin Dacey**, Maidstone prison community engagement manager



**JUST ROSY:** Low-risk prisoners are selected to work in the gardens at Maidstone Prison; a very privileged position

"I've seen it myself; reoffending is a revolving door and if you can equip someone with some new skills, the chances are he can go out and be able to support himself. It's a contentious issue, but I've seen prisoners put themselves on the straight and narrow."

Teaching horticulture and supplying organised allotments for the prisoners is one thing but the inclusion of a wildlife garden is something particularly forward thinking for the establishment.

In 2009, the kitchen was rebuilt on a new site and staff were required to leave the land where it once stood, as well as an old prisoner exercise yard alongside it, to go to seed for 12 months.

"In May 2011 we developed it into the wildlife garden," Mr Dacey adds. "We have old logs, bug hotels, all sorts of little habitats to encourage bees, hoverflies, moths and butterflies."

"We recognise bees especially are under threat and as a consequence of our work here they're absolutely thriving. I never thought I'd see myself getting so excited about bumblebees," said Mr Dacey.

As well as using the Gateway garden to teach the prisoners about biodiversity and the value of encouraging certain birds and insects into the gardens, it's also working out very well for wildlife. It's rare enough to have a refuge in a town centre, let alone one inside prison gates.

**T**he work at the prison, and in particular the input that horticultural instructor Justin Scott has had in the creation of the environmental garden, has been rewarded with the facility winning the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) wildlife award outright in both 2011 and 2012, as well as the best closed prison award for 2013.

Staff have been working alongside Kent Wildlife Trust for some time and set up many of the insect hotels and habitats in the garden upon their advice. But in the last year they have also developed a close relationship with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BCT), which was recently responsible for the release of a third

batch of the incredibly rare short-haired bumblebees in Dungeness.

The BCT has advised about planting in the Gateway garden and is excited to have partners like the prison on their side.

A spokesman for the BCT said: "While Maidstone is some distance from Dungeness [where there is a re-introduction project], it is hoped that if others follow the prison's example, the short-haired bumblebee and other rare species will have a corridor of flowers to follow when looking for food, allowing them to build new populations further afield."

If the short-haired bumblebees do make it as far as Maidstone, Mr Dacey assures them of a warm welcome.

He has been using the BCT's website to identify bees in the gardens for some time.

"I'd been looking at their website for a couple of years so it's great to be working with them now," said Mr Dacey. "We have spotted all sorts of bees including red-tailed, buff-tailed and white-tailed bumblebees but nothing rare just yet."



# Historic armour of Henry VIII battles back to Leeds Castle

A suit of armour once worn by Henry VIII returned to the county this week for the first time in 500 years.

The armour, which features a horned helmet commissioned by Roman emperor Maximilian I as a gift, will go on display at Leeds Castle until the end of August.

The monarch famously stayed at the castle in 1520 enroute to battle in France.

It will form part of a special exhibition which opened this week.

Some of the rarest pieces have been loaned to Leeds Castle by the Royal Armouries – home to the national collection of arms and armour.

Housed in the castle's new exhibition centre, the exhibits run alongside the 'Henry VIII and the Royal Armour Workshops at Greenwich' exhibition which runs until November 2. It examines the world of Tudor armour and armour making techniques.

Shortly after Henry VIII came to the throne in 1509, he established a royal armour workshop in the Palace of Greenwich, bringing armourers from abroad to make armour of the highest quality for the king and his court.

These objects including armourers' tools, part of Sir John Smythe's armour and two gorget plates from Henry's own armour. They tell the story of the Greenwich workshop and its immense impact on the development of body protection in England.



**EXHIBITION:** Henry VIII wore the armour when he was in his thirties



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**N**EXT time you're pondering what culinary treat to whip up to impress family and friends, the chances are you'll owe a debt of gratitude to Eliza Acton.

Because it was she who is dubbed 'the mother of the modern day cook-book' – compiling the first list of recipes and instructions aimed at the enthusiast rather than the professional cook or hired hand.

It was she who inspired the famous Mrs Beaton and whose skills would eventually inspire the likes of Delia Smith, who described her as "the best writer of recipes in the English language".

She was even friends with Charles Dickens.

But while her name may have been forgotten over the years, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is determined her memory lives on.

And this week it unveiled a special blue plaque outside the house she once lived.

Born in 1799 in Battle, in East Sussex, she would go on to live at The Priory in Borden, Tonbridge.

A poet, at heart, her first collection had been published in 1826 – focusing on the theme of unrequited love.

But it was her work *Modern Cookery for Private Families* which would establish her as one of the most influential figures of the 19th century.

First published in 1845, it compiled a list of recipes contributed by her friends.

Unlike other books at the time, it established the template for future recipes, listing the exact ingredients for each dish, the time needed and problems that may arise.

It was this precision which meant it was such a resounding success.

When she passed away in 1859, aged just 59, after a life which was dogged by ill health, her book lived on. Remarkably, it remained in print some 75 years after her death.

The famous Mrs Beaton's Book of Household Management was based on it, while many of her recipes are still in use today.

As well as helping people understand how to cook, she also included safety tips, like understanding how to recognise the freshness of meat and fish, warning "many of them are also dangerous eating when they are out of season".

She advised: "The eyes should always be bright, and the gills of fine clear red, the body stiff, the flesh firm, yet elastic to the touch".

The 636-page book was also the first to contain a recipe for Brussels sprouts and was reprinted recently by publisher Quadrille.

It was certainly not cheap. Back in the day it retailed for the equivalent of around £100 in today's money.

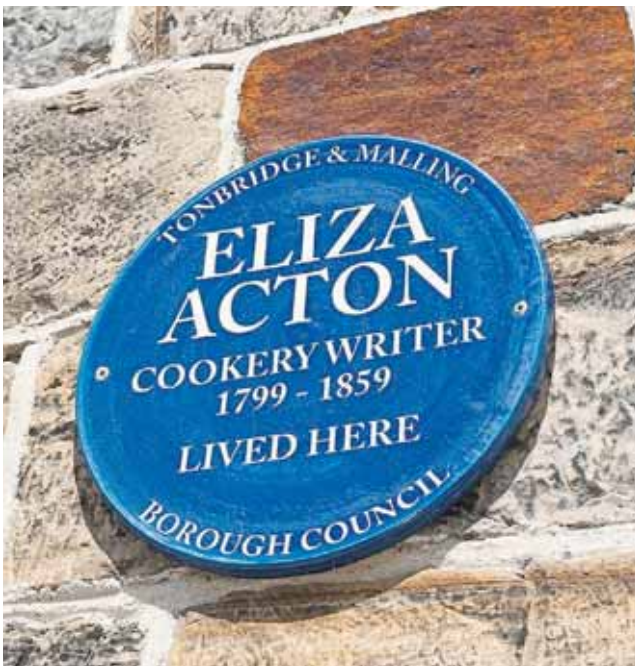
With additional impressive skills as a poet, the author was able to make things sound easy, considering her advice was new back then.

For example, on gathering and using eggs for an omelette, she writes: "Let them be very fresh; break them singly and carefully".

The world almost missed out. Her publisher, Longman, loved her first work of poetry in 1826, but rejected a second volume a decade later when she was 37.

With the advice to do something more practical ringing in her ears, she decided to use her years of experimenting at the stove to come up with her defining moment.

Mingled in with the wording, Miss



**MISTRESS CHEF:** Tonbridge's Eliza Acton and her recipe and cookery book set the bar for all cookery books that followed. Her plaque is shown above

# 'The mother of the modern cookbook' who inspired Mrs Beaton receives plaque

Poet-turned recipe writer Eliza Acton's 636-page work is the blueprint for all cookery books...and she knew Charles Dickens. [Chris Murphy](#) finds out more...

Acton could not help herself but to comment personally on some of the dishes, but restrained herself to a few words inside brackets. These included 'Lemon Dumplings (Light and Good)'. Or, 'Mushrooms Au Beurre (Delicious)'.

The spinster also remembered where she lived with her mother and servants and immortalised the town along the way.

There are recipes like Borden Veal Cake, Tonbridge Cake and Tonbridge Ginger Wine.

At the age of 18, the ambitious Miss Acton and a pal opened their own boarding school in Ipswich, where she worked for four years. It was trips to France that sparked her love of

cooking. There were rumours of a child by a French officer.

She was in touch with another famous Kent writer, Charles Dickens and sent him a copy of her book, and drew his attention to Ruth Pinch's Beefsteak Puddings, a nod to the character Ruth in Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

He wrote back, saying: "I beg to thank you cordially for your very satisfying and welcome note."

After moving to Hampstead, London, to produce the less well known *The English Bread Book* in 1857, she died two years later. She was buried in Hampstead.

Putting up these plaques is the brainchild of the local council, with assistance and guidance from Tonbridge Civic Society, Tonbridge Historical Society, Men of Kent and Kentish Men and the Town Wardens.

Miss Acton's plaque was unveiled at a special ceremony at The Priory, Borden. It was made by Aylesford Pottery.

Cabinet member for leisure, youth and arts, Maria Heslop said: "Tonbridge has a long and rich history and many well-known people have lived here. It is right that we should celebrate the town's heritage and the council hopes that this initiative will highlight these links with our past."

**“...many of them are also dangerous eating when out of season... The eyes should always be bright, the body stiff, the flesh firm, yet elastic to the touch”**

**Eliza Acton**, on how to recognise the freshness of meat and fish...

## Who else has been honoured with blue plaque recognition?

THE Tonbridge and Malling area is a hotbed of famous and worthy characters from history.

The blue plaque system is widely recognised as a quick, cheap and yet poignant way of showing the world where these people, who made a difference, once hailed from.

As well as the plaque for Eliza Acton, there are five more plaques in Tonbridge to commemorate the lives of those that in some way made history.

More could go up in the future, but the council said there are no plans as yet.

Dotted around the town are plaques for EM Forster who lived at 38 Dry Hill Park Road, which is now Hilden Oaks School and Nursery.

He attended Tonbridge School and later wrote *A Passage to India*, *Howard's End*, and *Where Angels Fear to Tread*.

Colin Blythe who lived at 29

Goldsmid Road, Tonbridge, was a cricketer killed at the Battle of Passchendaele in the First World War. He is also commemorated by a monument in the parish church.

Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge lived at Ferox Hall in the High Street and attended Tonbridge School. He went on to become Kent and England cricket captain in the 1960s.

Neville Duke lived at 82 Hadlow Road and attended the Judd School.

He was a Second World War fighter pilot and a noted test pilot in the post-war period, who was born in Tonbridge. He set the world air speed record in 1953.

And finally, Admiral Lord Lewin of Greenwich, from 3 Quarry Gardens, attended Judd School. Terence Lewin, who was also born in the town, was First Sea Lord and Chief of the Defence Staff during the Falklands War.





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# It could be all change for county's crops as climate change kicks in

Our fields and orchards could one day be full of nectarines, peaches and kiwi fruit as climate change alters food production forever, **Jamie Weir** reports

**C**LIMATE change has long been acknowledged as a key driver in the changing face of food production in the county.

After all, we have long been established as a wine-producing region with a line in the sparkling variety that can rival the very best.

What's more, in recent years, crops such as olives, apricots, melons and even kiwi fruits have been grown on our doorstep – albeit with varying levels of success.

The trick now is to capitalise on the changing conditions to harness the potential it offers and ensure the county cashes in.

Ed Martin is manager of Produced in Kent – an organisation that champions local food and drink producers.

He said: "The county is sitting on an extraordinary opportunity to lead the way globally on climate-change issues. That could lead to job creation as we see others come to us for our expertise in producing crops with less water and responding to a different climate.

"We are already producing exceptional sparkling wine and this is likely to take over from the Champagne region as it becomes too hot for producers there to grow the right type of grapes. We could see Kent's sparkling wine succeeding Champagne in the next 20 years."

So what has fundamentally changed to allow us to harvest more exotic crops?

A key factor is the decline in the sometimes-harsh spring frosts that can be so destructive to plants at such a key stage in their growth.

As the warmer climate takes hold, those frosts are becoming fewer and far between. And that paves the way for crops with roots in warmer climes.

Apricots are one such crop that benefit from fewer frosts and longer, warmer autumns. Not that it has proved an easy journey.

Robert Hinge, one of the UK's only apricot-producers, has had mixed experiences growing the fruit at his farm near Sittingbourne.

He said: "It's still a very dodgy crop to grow in the county. We've just picked the fruit and this year we got a decent amount, but we have seen bad yields as well.

"Last year the frost killed off all of the flowers, which meant that the crop was ruined and we didn't get anything off the trees."

Mr Hinge has only started growing the soft fruit on a commercial basis recently after the farm got funding from supermarket chain Marks and Spencer.

Mr Hinge said: "During the picking

season, it needs to be a dry autumn, otherwise the fruit gets damaged. You need to think about the fruit as being like a strawberry on a tree.

"It's so delicate that rain during the picking season can ruin the crop.

"In four years of growing them commercially, we've seen two good years and two bad years. It's fair to say that it's been challenging."

While it may have been a challenge, Mr Hinge is optimistic. He talks of nectarines and peaches potentially being next on the agenda for him.

And other growers are attempting new and exciting crops, too. Kiwi fruit is normally seen growing in countries like Italy, Chile or Greece, but one fruit-producer has just finished trialling a crop of the fruit in Kent.

Caroline Ashdown, grower liaison manager at fruit producer Fruition PO Ltd in Whitstable, was in charge of the trial.

She said: "Our trial lasted for four years and we had about 700 kiwi vines spread out over an acre. We did manage to get flowers, but sadly we never achieved any fruit. At the moment, it is just a bit too wet and a bit too cold in the summer months for the fruit to be productive."

But she is still positive about the chances of growing the fruit.

She said: "I still believe kiwi fruit can be grown in Kent under the right conditions in the future."

East Malling Research (EMR), a specialist science research station, has been working on ways to help farmers respond to the changing climate.

Its farm manager, Graham Caspell, said: "We're basically spearheading what the county's producers will be growing in the future. We've trialled melons and shown farmers it was possible to grow them and as a result we saw a response, with some producers starting out in the crop.

"We are able to give them guidance and help them grow successfully. We are currently trialling other interesting fruits as well, but I can't tell you

**“We're basically spearheading what the county's producers will be growing in the future. We've trialled melons, and showed it's possible to grow them”**

**Graham Caspell,**  
East Malling Research (EMR)



**NEW GROWTH:** Ed Martin, of Produced in Kent, is looking to the future

what they are as that's confidential."

However, while EMR's trials are currently top-secret, Mr Caspell did give us a hint on what could be around the corner.

He said: "The climate seems to be shifting north. That means in the future we're likely to be growing things currently grown in Spain and other more southern parts of the world."

But climate change won't just alter what we grow – it may have an impact on how we grow it as well.

**M**r Martin from Produced in Kent said that the landscape may be altered, depending on what farmers used to produce their crops.

He said: "We might see more poly-tunnels being used so that traditional crops like cherries can be grown without worrying about hard rain damaging them.

"But we might also see more unusual crops being grown as a result of temperatures becoming more moderate throughout the year.

"If that's the case, it could alter the character of the landscape as producers use greater amounts of plastic to cover their fields.

"Then we need to start looking at the impacts of that. What would it mean for the county's producers and also other users of Kent's countryside?"

One thing is certain, however, and

## Weather trends

CLIMATE change in Kent is in line with national trends.

Between 1961 and 2006, average temperatures rose annually in the UK. The rise was between 1°C and 1.7°C in spring, summer, autumn and winter. Kent's increase has tended, since 1961, to be largest in the south-east region of the county.

Sea-level rises of about one millimetre per year have taken place annually since the middle of the 20th century. The rate has increased in the 1990s and 2000s.

In the last 45 years, the county has seen an increase in the amount of rainfall it has during winter months – two of its wettest years in recent memory were in 2012 and 2013.

However, on average over the past 45 years, summer rainfall has decreased.

So what does the future hold for our county's climate?

Kent's location and its long coastline mean that climate change is likely to be more sharply felt in the county than elsewhere in the UK.

Findings from a report funded by Defra and the Department for Energy and Climate Change, and the Met Office, suggest that by 2050 the South East is likely to have:

- Winters that are likely to be warmer by about 2.2°C
- Summers across Kent are likely to be hotter by about 2.8°C
- The hottest summer days could increase by up to 3.7°C
- Summer night-time temperatures are likely to increase by 3°C
- Winter rainfall is likely to increase by 16 per cent
- Summer rainfall is likely to decrease by 19 per cent

that is the increasing temperatures will usher in new opportunities from which the county is poised to benefit.

Explains Ross Newham, spokesman for East Malling Research: "Increasing average temperatures, which have been steadily rising, will open up opportunities to grow completely new crops in the UK – with Kent's location and maritime climate, these new crops are likely to gain a foothold in Kent before other counties are able to investigate their wider production.

"Together, skilled crop husbandry, science and our geographic location will put Kent growers at the forefront of a fascinating food production story in a changing climate."



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Lounge on the Farm takes place on August 2. For ticket details, see: [www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk](http://www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk)





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**DOGS OF WAR:** More than 100,000 people attended last week's five-day War and Peace Revival at Folkestone Racecourse as enthusiasts turned up to celebrate hundreds of years of military history

# Thousands battle the elements to enjoy War and Peace Revival

'Best ever' show pays fitting centenary tribute to many heroes lost in Great War. **Chris Britcher** reports



**O**RGANISERS have declared the War and Peace Revival last week as "the best ever".

More than 100,000 people flocked to Folkestone Racecourse for the popular event which reflects on battles past and present.

And this year's event was more poignant than most.

It commemorated 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War, 75 years since the Battle of Britain and 70 years since D-Day.

The event – which shifted from its former home at Paddock Wood's Hop Farm in 2013 – is the world's largest collection of military vehicles and ran over five-days.

Record crowds braved the heat and the rain to experience the exhibits, re-enactments, shows and other entertainment.

Rex Cadman, who organises the event, said: "I'm delighted to confirm our visitor numbers topped 100,000 once again this year, despite the days of scorching sun and the raging storm that followed. They came from across the country and the world, many using Southeastern's high-speed trains from London which stopped directly at the showground.

"Our veterans' day welcomed

30 taxis from the London Taxi Benevolent Association bringing around 50 veterans, including three Chelsea Pensioners, who had fought in conflicts including Malaya and Borneo, a coachload of 50 from the Normandy Veterans' Association and many others who came through the gate independently.

"It was incredible – everywhere you looked were rows upon rows of medals."

To mark the centenary of the Great War, there was a special exhibition which included two trench systems.

On the opening days of the event, 2,500 schoolchildren from 55 Kent schools got the chance to get a glimpse of what life must have been like for the millions of soldiers who fought – and died – on the battlefields of France and Belgium.

There was even a wedding after one couple married, complete in 1940s uniforms and with a ration-book reception.

Mr Cadman added: "We are already working towards the 2015 show which will be held from July 22-26 at Folkestone Racecourse, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back to another great show."



Picture: SIMON THOMSON





# The seaside town, the retired admiral and the white feather movement's bid to shame the 'cowards'

Designed to make young men volunteer to serve in the Great War, the Folkestone-born scheme quickly spread but soon became unpopular, as **Maria Chiorando** reports

**F**OLKESTONE'S role during the First World War will forever be tied to the passage of the millions of soldiers who marched through the town and on to boats taking them to the frontline.

For many, the seaside resort was the last glimpse they would have of their home country.

But it would also become the birthplace of a controversial movement designed to shame those not going into battle for King and country.

Although women were barred from fighting, away from the battlefields society at home was changing, too.

The outbreak of war had been something of a watershed moment – shattering the order of society.

Gender roles were evolving as women began to be more active in the workforce and as the suffrage movement gained momentum.

The changing face of women's role in society then collided with what became known simply as the 'white feather movement', which was born in the seaside town and would stretch its wings to spread across the nation.

Its intention was simple – to shame all men perceived as shirking their responsibilities at the front.

It execution, however, was frequently clumsy and it continues to this day to provoke considerable controversy.

So what was the movement – and just how did it emerge from Folkestone?

Prior to the outbreak of war, the town was a popular retreat for the wealthy and leisured classes.

As a garrison town, local people would often see troops who were stationed there, and the enormous flood of soldiers pouring into the town rudely awoke them to the scale of the war raging on the European mainland.

Admiral Charles Penrose Fitzgerald lived in the town and had paid close attention to the mounting tensions prior to its outbreak.

He was 73 when hostilities erupted and had spent his career serving in the Royal Navy – starting out on HMS Victory back in 1854.

He was old-fashioned and had a

reputation of being something of an eccentric. And he certainly had a bee in his bonnet about the issue of conscription.

When war first broke out, enrolling to fight was voluntary for the first two years of the conflict. A patriotic fervour propelled many to sign up, unaware of the horrors of a very different war which awaited them.

No doubt fuelled by a life of serving his country, the retired admiral despised seeing young men of military age not representing their country; he saw them as idle and cowardly and felt they should be defending the nation.

To this end, he hatched a campaign to persuade the men into action and it swung into operation just weeks after the war began.

He recruited 30 young women who lived locally, and instructed them to hand any healthy man of military age, who was not in military uniform, a white feather.

It would act, he claimed, as a powerful symbol of perceived cowardice. The fact it was delivered by a woman made it all the more powerful.

"The most likely reason for choosing women to give out the feathers is this shame element," Gravesend historian Christoph Bull explained to KoS this week.

"A lot of the propaganda during the war was very spiteful, and this really tied into it.

"To have a woman saying what you should do, it was very demeaning."

The symbolism of the white feather originally came from cock-fighting.

Because some of the birds have

**"A lot of the propaganda during the war was very spiteful, and this really tied into it. To have a woman saying what you should do was demeaning"**

**Christoph Bull,**  
Gravesend historian

white feathers in their tails, turning tail, or backing away from a fight revealed these white feathers.

The women handing out feathers were instructed to tell the men that 'British soldiers are fighting across the Channel' and also that they were not 'real men'.

Its aim to embarrass the men, to make them question their own masculine identity and, ultimately, to sign up for the war effort, was powerful.

Reported on by the local press, it swiftly spread across the nation.

And it became a cause popular with many suffragettes.

In fact, some mistakenly believe the suffragettes were behind the campaign. This is not correct, but many of them were active in the operation and indeed saw their participation as their contribution to the war effort.

It is likely that some women would have felt reluctant to be part of the movement, though.

Explains Mr Bull: "There was a huge amount of pressure to protect the honour of Britain.

"There was a lot of propaganda, pushing men and women to 'do their bit'."

Posters were published, with slogans such as "Women of Britain Say Go" – which intended to persuade men to go and fight and also provoke women into encouraging the men.

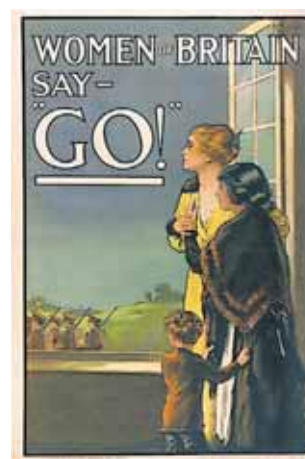
"But there are so many reasons people didn't go to war," explains Mr Bull.

"For example, someone may have injuries that you can't see, or be public servants who had a legitimate reason to stay at home to do their job."

**U**nfortunately, the feathers were given out indiscriminately to men who weren't in uniform – many of whom were on leave after fighting at the front, or were nursing unseen injuries from the conflict.

This put pressure on authorities to take action against these women, with some saying that they should be imprisoned. It prompted Reginald McKenna, the home secretary, to give lapel badges to public servants.

The badges, which bore the inscription 'King and Country', were de-



**WHITE FEATHER:** The movement's founder Admiral Charles Penrose Fitzgerald (above) and a poster encouraging men to join the good fight

## STARS OF PROMOTION CAMPAIGN

THE social context of the outbreak of war is key to why the white feather movement took off.

Prior to the Great War, society had begun to break free from the staid Victorian era and although there was still a distinct class system, there were movements of change. The conflict would change everything.

The milieu of British society was slowly eroded by the violence and bloodshed that was to dominate the next four years, and the optimism and pride at the beginning of the war was

replaced by a growing horror at the reality of the death, pain and suffering that are the hallmarks of combat.

"People were very naive," explains Gravesend historian Christoph Bull.

"While there had been vicious wars before – for example the Boer War – they had never experienced industrial warfare on the scale of the First World War before.

"Young men thought it would be a lark, but the reality was that it was very, very hard."

**"The movement was incredibly unpopular because of the pressure. So much hysteria was whipped up, the propaganda was very powerful"**

**Christoph Bull,** on how the movement was perceived

signed to protect these men from the white-feather women.

To avoid men who had been honourably discharged from being accosted, they too were given a lapel pin – the silver war badge represented those who had been injured in combat, or made ill.

They were first issued in 1916, in September.

**A**s the war drew on, more men were discharged with severe wounds, some of which were not always immediately visible.

As more and more of these veterans were targeted by the women, ridiculed and humiliated, the movement became less popular, its morality called into question.

While these women believed that they were playing their part in the war effort, and supporting frontline soldiers by encouraging more to join them, they began to become targets themselves, their patriotism being seen as little more than bullying tactics.

Mr Bull says: "The movement was incredibly unpopular because of the pressure. So much hysteria was whipped up and the propaganda was very powerful."



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**SUNSHINE AND SHOWERS:** Chart-toppers Scouting for Girls, pictured far right, and X Factor's Luke Friend, bottom left, were among the entertainment crowds enjoyed at the 77th Dartford Festival

# Deluge can't dampen festival's high spirits

Sweltering temperatures then thunderstorms, but large crowds still turn out to enjoy free council event



**By Chris Britcher**  
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

**O**RGANISERS of this year's Dartford Festival have hailed the event a huge success, with thousands braving the sweltering weather for the annual celebration.

The event took part in Central Park as temperatures rose to 30C-plus, before the heat gave way to heavy rain and thunderstorms.

Now in its 77th year, Dartford Borough Council has developed the festival from a town carnival into one of the biggest free festivals in the south east.

Among the acts performing were

chart-toppers Scouting for Girls and The Beat. Also wooing the crowds was Luke Friend – the 17-year-old star of X Factor.

Away from the main stage, a host of charities, organisations and businesses worked hard to put on displays, demonstrations and activities.

Council leader Jeremy Kite said: "We've already had so much positive feedback about this year's festival.

"I know some councils are cutting back on festivals, but not here in Dartford. We love doing it and I'm delighted that people had such a great time.

"From the huge crowds in early afternoon through to the dancers in the deluge it showed the very best of Dartford and we look forward to next year's event."



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**HOME FROM HOME:** Conservationists are finally seeing signs that queen short-haired bumblebees brought in from Sweden are finally breeding on the Romney Marshes and at Dungeness

# Can you bee-lieve it? Project to revive extinct species is working

Reintroduction of short-haired bumblebees to county boosted by breeding signs, writes **Chris Murphy**

**T**HE saga of the short-haired bumblebee finally looks as though it has something to raise a glass to, after signs an ambitious reintroduction programme is showing signs of breeding success.

The sudden and rapid decline in the bee population – so essential to the pollination process – stunned experts in the county.

So extravagant rescue plans swung into action, designed to reintroduce the particular species which was once so prevalent in the county.

The location selected was a nature reserve in Dungeness – seen as an ideal, and safe, area for them to blossom.

But first attempts faltered when imported queen bees perished and the programme fizzled out.

Determined to make it a success, however, more were carefully caught and transferred all the way from Sweden this spring.

And this week it was confirmed two worker bees found at RSPB Dungeness are evidence the queen bees introduced from Sweden this spring have nested, say the experts.

Project officer Dr Nikki Gammans has been out with volunteers monitoring Dungeness and the Romney Marshes for rare bees.

She said: "This is exactly what we hoped to find this month. The meadows provided for the bees, in partnership with local farmers, are rich in nectar and pollen and offer corridors for the queens to disperse and find good nesting places."

The queens build nests underground, as their scientific name 'subterraneus' suggests.

They then produce female worker bees that build the colony.

The team is now holding its breath until early September to see if the next step is just as successful.

This is when the colony produces males, and new queens.

The males do not survive the winter but the queens hibernate and so the cycle is continued.

With our up and down weather systems in the past few years, the winter conditions will be just as important to their survival.

Wet winter weather can flood and kill the hibernating queens, but it also gives the meadows a real boost and the bees are reaping the rewards now.

It is calculated Britain has lost 97 per cent of flowering meadows in the

last 70 years – a loss of habitat which has dealt such a blow to the bee population.

Conservationists and scientists say this can't go on as bees are a vital pollinator of our food crops with an estimated worth of £510 million a year.

Defra's National Ecosystem Assessment 2011 report estimates pollinating insects are worth £430 million a year – the cost to pollinate our food crops each year if they disappeared altogether. A more recent report from Friends of the Earth put that figure at £510m.

All of which contributed to the project at Dungeness, which saw meadows planted and developed ahead of the arrival of the imported queen bees.

A State of Nature report, published by 25 leading conservation groups, highlighted the short-haired bumblebee project as a beacon of hope for bumblebees in the UK.

The farmers have created corridors of suitable habitat linking farmland and nature reserves in the area, allowing bees to spread out.

These corridors of flower-rich habitat across the Romney Marsh area have created an increase and spread in the numbers of bumblebee species in Kent.

Five threatened species, which include England's rarest bumblebee the shrill carder bee, have all increased their geographic range in this area after decades of decline.

Now three years in to a five-year project to reintroduce queens from a thriving population in Sweden, it

aims to re-establish the species, which became extinct in the UK in 1988.

The team, made up of experts from Natural England, Hymettus – a specialist organisation offering advice on the conservation of bees, wasps and ant – the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and the RSPB, can now only wait and hope the colony eventually spreads.

To help gardeners across the county to recognise what's in their garden, and hopefully report back in, Dr Gammans has published *The Bumblebees of Kent*.

The guide will help identification for gardeners to know what is visiting their flowerbeds.

"Planting lavender, sage, rosemary, mint and thyme is good for the kitchen, but also great for bees," said Dr Gammans.

"It is fun knowing which species are in your garden, and you may even be rewarded with a visit from a short-haired bumblebee... how else would you know?"

"Native bumblebees have suffered serious declines, two species are now extinct, and seven are very rare. Only through the joint efforts of farmers, gardeners and conservation partnerships will we recover these popular and important insects to our gardens, meadows and orchards."

There are 24 other species of bumblebee in the UK – including eight which are commonly seen in most areas and seven threatened species which are priorities for conservation action.

## WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

THIS is the second international effort to reintroduce the rare short-haired bumblebee to Kent – the first one ending in disaster.

Scientists had bred several queen bees in New Zealand to ship back to Dungeness, but they all died. Tragically, it is not known exactly why.

Experts then turned to Sweden for 50 specially bred short-haired bumblebee queens, to bring back a species last recorded at Dungeness in 1988.

The queens were collected from the province of Skane, and placed in refrigeration to induce a temporary hibernation. They were also well fed with Kent pollen to help with acclimatisation.

Then queens were quarantined at the Royal Holloway University of London to ensure they were free from diseases or parasites, and finally released at Dungeness.

Over the past three years local farmers have helped create more than 650 hectares of new suitable habitat to give the bees the best possible start and encourage other wildlife across the peninsula.

**“Only through joint efforts of conservation partnerships, farmers and gardeners will we recover these insects to our gardens, meadows and orchards”**

**Dr Nikki Gammans,**  
RSPB project officer



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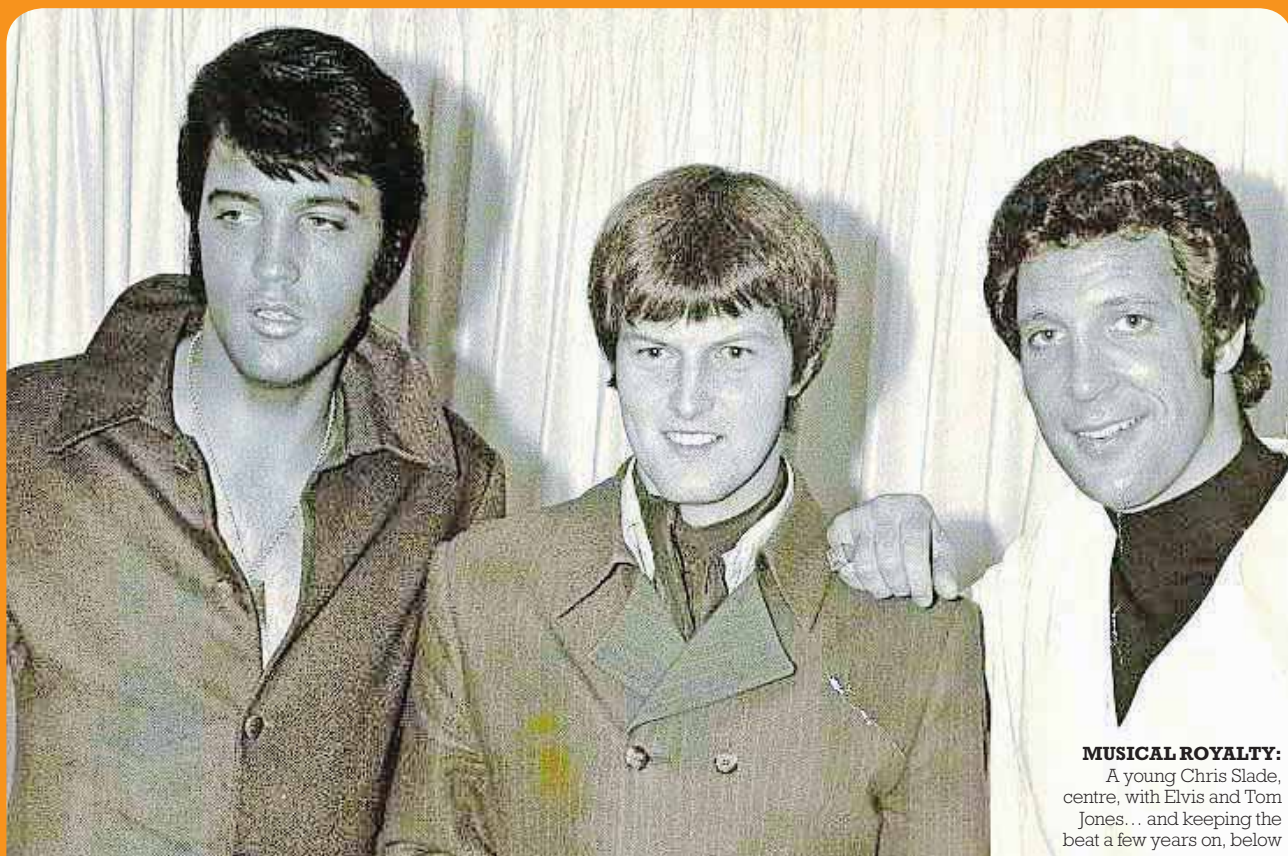
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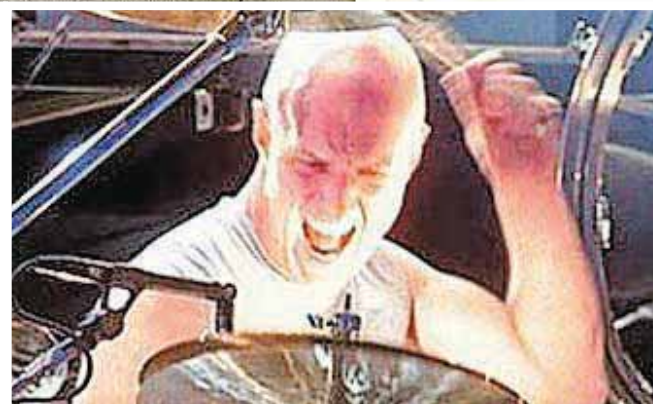
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**MUSICAL ROYALTY:**  
A young Chris Slade, centre, with Elvis and Tom Jones... and keeping the beat a few years on, below



## Drummer boy Chris shows he's still keeping good time

Chris Slade has performed with some of the best in the business, including AC/DC. Next month he is playing at his local beer festival in Ashford... here he tells **David Mairs** about his life in music and turning down the chance to play with Elvis.

**S**OMETIMES it surprises you, the talented folk who live in your midst. Particularly those who have plied their trade at the highest tables of entertainment and, dare we say it, stardom.

Take Chris Slade, a man who lives in Ashford and who from 1989-94 was drummer with AC/DC, one of the biggest rock bands

the world has known. He also played with Manfred Mann's Earth Band, Uriah Heep, Asia, Gary Moore, Michael Schenker Group, Gary Numan and The Firm. Oh, and with Tom Jones... and Olivia Newton-John, too.

Speaking to him, it's not rocket science to deduce from his soft, lilting accent that Slade is from South Wales. Pontypridd, to be

precise. But he's a local (to us) boy, really.

"I've been moving around Kent and East Sussex half my life, I think. I was in the Hastings area, then the Ashford area – I left Pontypridd when I was 17 or 18. I used to go back to see the family, of course, but my life is up here. I lived in Sunbury in a boat on the Thames in the mid-1960s."

As evidence of his Kent grounding, Slade will be headlining next month's Ashford Rugby Club Beer Festival with his touring band THE CHRIS SLADE TIMELINE.

Talking with someone who has led as diverse a life in the world of rock as one might imagine, the

Continued on page 49 »



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« Continued from page 47

the highlights.

"They were all highlights, to be honest. I suppose it's got to be AC/DC – they were arguably the biggest band in the world."

"Pink Floyd?" I venture.

"Won't tour."

"We sold more than the Stones and if you combine touring and albums we were at least as big as The Beatles."

And then, with due recognition of this writer's self-indulgence, there's Rush, a band who are almost so uncool they're cool... and who also are hugely popular across the world.

**66 They were all highlights... I suppose it's AC/DC - they were arguably the biggest band in the world 99**

"I know the guys – they actually do better touring than they do selling records."

"I first met Neil [Rush drummer Peart] when he had been in the band just two weeks – they were supporting the Earth Band."

"I remember talking to him and we were discussing drummers' roles as lyricists – he's very philosophical, very intelligent."

It's a point worth making as Slade himself points out that drummers do not always receive the respect they might deserve, especially as it's their role to keep the band in time.

"Drumming is a much-maligned occupation," he said. "It's a bit like



**RAZOR-SHARP:** Slade played with AC/DC for five years before resigning when told the band were considering bringing back former drummer Phil Rudd

being a goalkeeper in football – if a goal goes in, it's his fault. It's the drummer's job to keep time – if that isn't there, then you have a problem.

"Some drummers just won't learn

their lessons... maybe they can't."

"I never used a click track [think of it as an electronic metronome to set the beat] with AC/DC. A lot of people give drummers a click track in their

headphones, which should keep everybody in time."

"The rest of the band listen to the drummer – at least that's what has been happening in the last 15 or 20

years. You're calling the shots. If you're confident in your timekeeping you can rein in those people who are

Continued on page 50 »

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## « Continued from page 49

straying. With a lot of people you've got to be really stern – tell them I'm sitting right here where it started and where it's going to finish."

If AC/DC, for whom he played on the 1990 album *The Razors Edge*, was just about the highlight of a career spent among the stars, Slade's time with fellow Pontypridd boy Tom Jones, whom he joined as one of his Squires at the age of 16 in the 1960s, clearly made almost as big an impression.

"Tom was bigger than Sinatra and Elvis put together and I'm not exaggerating – he was huge in America. We did Madison Square Garden in 1966 with the Count Basie Orchestra, who I played with as well. They were booked back to back and they had a 35-piece orchestra, who did their set and then Tom did his bit."

It seems there's no one in the world of rock that Slade doesn't know or about whom he hasn't got a story.

Like the time journalist Jon Landau gave the album *Greetings From Asbury Park NJ*, from "unknown singer-songwriter" Bruce Springsteen to Manfred Mann, who "took one of the songs and rearranged it completely" before releasing it as a single... "Blinded By The Light is still Springsteen's only No 1," said Slade, with just the tiniest hint of irony.

Perhaps the biggest story for Slade, though, is what didn't happen.

While drumming for Tom Jones, he was asked to play for Elvis Presley... but it was an offer he had to refuse.

"It's the biggest regret of my career," he said. "I was contracted to

Tom and his manager Gordon Miles wouldn't let me out of it, so I couldn't make the rehearsals for Elvis.

"I met him a few times – he came

**“It's the biggest regret of my career. I was contracted to Tom, so I couldn't make the rehearsals for Elvis”**

to a few of our shows, saw us perform and liked what he saw. He said 'You know what, we could use you and

[another drummer] Ronnie Tutt.

"I was 21 or 22 at the time and perhaps didn't have the confidence, but I should have just walked."

An understandable sentiment on reflection maybe, but, given that Slade recalls Jones as a bigger draw than Presley anyway, perhaps it's also a little puzzling.

"They were certainly of the same status," he said. "Tom had a weekly TV show in the States – as I said, he was huge.

"That was the consolation – playing with Tom was good, but to play for the iconic Elvis as a British

drummer was on a different level. I would have been playing for the most iconic figure ever in rock'n'roll and it was going to be for an Elvis movie."

Despite the regret, Slade is "very proud" of having been asked to play for Elvis. "I must have been doing something right," he said.

The experiences of the great and the good in the world of rock just kept on coming.

Although he never met Pink Floyd front man Roger Waters, he did play with band guitarist David Gilmour "between the two Floyds" and "met the others guys just two years ago".



He played with Floyd drummer Nick Mason at Rock'n'Roll Fantasy Camp.

With the drummer setting the time for a band, how does it work when you have two playing together?

"You follow each other, you blend, which is what you try to do in a band anyway. I like Nick's laid-back snare, while I drive a band.

"Nick's got a great sense of time and is also one of the nicest people you could meet. I worked with him for a full year when most of our time was spent on buses, so we know each other pretty well."

It might surprise some that drummers – some of them anyway – have a well-developed sensitive side and this can find expression through the writing of lyrics.

Slade wrote while with the Earth Band and has co-written pieces when on the road. Fans might get to hear some of these at the beer festival, where his band will be playing some two hours on the Friday evening, when the party should be in full swing.

It's been a career worthy of a book, and indeed one should soon be on its way, but – missing out on Elvis aside – there were low points and some tough decisions.

For example, how did the move away from Tom Jones come about?

"I'd been with Tom 10 years and it was time to move on. We'd started together and literally used to eat every other day – we lived in a basement flat in London with [bass player] Vernon Mills and if it wasn't

Continued on page 53»

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« Continued from page 50

for food parcels from home we would have really struggled.”

Does he still see the now Sir Tom?

“Five years ago I was in Las Vegas, where he was playing to packed audiences every night. I told him I’d enjoyed the show and said goodbye. Then, purely by chance, I walked in to a bar at about 4am and he was there and we had a beer.”

For all the names, all the bands and all the stories, you still get the idea that Slade is defined by his five years with AC/DC, that perhaps he most defines himself by that period. Sadly, it was one that ended abruptly when the band’s legendary rhythm

“It absolutely devastated me. I didn’t touch a drumstick for three years... it came as a bolt out of the blue”

guitarist Malcolm Young called him to say that the band were considering getting back together with former drummer Phil Rudd.

To say Slade took the news badly would be a striking understatement.

“It absolutely devastated me,” he said. “I didn’t touch a drumstick for three years. We’d done two months of demos and it came as a bolt out of the blue.”

“I’m very philosophical and Malcolm said it’s nothing you’re not doing or doing wrong – we’re just trying Phil out. I resigned on the spot.”

“I did meet Phil and the guys later and we went for a beer.”



**THE BEAT STILL GOES ON:** Catch Chris Slade and his band at Ashford Rugby Club’s beer festival in August

“After that, I went to art college and thought ‘Put your heart and soul into this.’”

Heart and soul... the phrase rings true as there’s an honesty that shines

from Chris Slade when you speak to him. His book will assuredly be worth reading, as much as his music will be worth listening to at Ashford’s beer festival in August.

Fellow rockers, be there!

■ **Ashford Rugby Club Beer Festival** (Canterbury Road, Ashford) runs from Friday to Sunday, August 29-31.



**THE CHRIS SLADE TIMELINE** are playing on the Friday, when the gates open at 4pm, with music beginning at 6pm. Slade’s band take to the stage at 10pm. On the Saturday, gates open at 10am, rugby starts at 10.30am and music begins at 1pm. On Sunday, the festival is open from 10.30am-5pm. Tickets for each day are priced at £7.50, except for Sunday, which has free entry.

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# Book now... for Christmas

## Christmas in the manor you'll become accustomed to with a visit to Eastwell

THE sights and smells of Eastwell Manor's Christmas decorations are legendary.

Real Christmas trees will adorn the hotel between November 30 and January 6... we recommend a visit.

Organise your bespoke personal or corporate Christmas party in the Manor: the historic, wood-panelled rooms, suitable for up to 80 people, look even more beautiful by candlelight.

The Pavilion is ideal for bigger, less

formal parties of 60-120 people and your event will be tailor-made for you.

Event organisers can arrange any additional entertainment to make your party one to remember, with prices starting from £38 per person.

Eastwell Manor has some wonderful events planned over the festive period.

Slip on your dancing shoes and go to a Christmas Ball; try your luck at the virtual race night; enjoy the romantic sounds of 'Bublé' and

'Sinatra' at the Vegas-themed party or, for the more energetic, there is a fabulous Motown tribute act.

Each event begins with a reception before a specially-created dinner in the two-rosette Manor Restaurant, followed, of course, by exceptional entertainment.

Why not spoil yourself and your loved ones: go to an event and stay the night from £75 per person.

Two- and three-night residential packages including a Twixmas (me



time) break from £250 per person.

All overnight stays include full English breakfast and use of the extensive spa facilities.

For further information, to request

a brochure or to make a booking, phone 01233 213020 or email [reservations@eastwellmanor.co.uk](mailto:reservations@eastwellmanor.co.uk). A festive brochure is available at [www.eastwellmanor.co.uk](http://www.eastwellmanor.co.uk).



## Champagne Bar pub's toast to a very merry Christmas

THE picturesque 14th-century Red Lion pub in Hernhill near Faversham dates back to the 1300s and still contains many original features.

It offers a selection of traditional English food alongside the frequently-changing seasonal specials.

Facilities include a new upstairs Champagne Bar – perfect for large functions – a front patio overlooking the village green and well-established pub garden.

The Champagne Bar and

restaurant are the perfect place to host your Christmas party – fantastic service and a choice of great food for your festive fun.

The cosy atmosphere will make you want to stay all day and all night.

Should you decide to book your date for Christmas, please phone 01227 751207 or contact the pub through [www.theredlion.org.uk](http://www.theredlion.org.uk). For parties of 10 or more, a non-returnable deposit is required, which can be paid once you have booked.

## Little slice of Italian alternative way of celebrating festivities

ESTABLISHED in 1990, Don Giovanni is as popular today as it has ever been.

Offering superb Italian cuisine, the excellent food is backed up with years of experience.

The eatery offers a varied and extensive menu at reasonable prices.

Sunday to Thursday you can also enjoy any pizza and soft drink for only £10 or for £12 any pizza plus a beer or wine.

Set in the heart of Folkestone, Don Giovanni's is the perfect spot for businesses to celebrate the festive season. Seating up to 40

people, we can cater for work parties both small and large.

Don Giovanni's has built up a fantastic reputation across the county for its friendly service and homemade cuisine.

Please come and visit our newly-refurbished restaurant and see our new menu... we're sure you won't be disappointed.

Book early for your Christmas party to avoid disappointment. You can find Don Giovanni at 18 Bouverie Road West, Folkestone CT20 2SZ (telephone 01303 850 962, email [bookings@dongiovanni.co.uk](mailto:bookings@dongiovanni.co.uk)).



## Family-run business invites you to get your teeth into some tasty traditional winter fare

THE Tudor Rose is a family-run business serving local fresh food daily, including all day Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

The varied menu includes traditional dishes such as fish and chips, steak-and-ale suet pudding and barbecued pulled pork burger, to regularly-changing specials including smoked poached haddock and sizzling 10oz steaks.

It also has a carvery running Friday and Saturday evenings and on

Sunday from noon to 5.30pm; this will also run every day and evening in December. So book your Christmas party now, for family and friends to enjoy our honey-glazed gammon, roast turkey, beef and pork served with all the trimmings.

Our private function room can cater for any occasion, from weddings and birthdays to funerals, providing buffets to suit individuals.

These can either be hot and cold finger buffet including somosas,

spring rolls and drumsticks, sandwiches to knife-and-fork buffet including dressed salmon, oriental salads and meat flats.

It is also a good friendly pub for a social drink in the bar area or in our large beer garden and we have live bands once a month in our function room, open to everybody.

We're taking bookings now for Christmas; call at Chestnut Street, Borden, Sittingbourne ME9 8BT or phone 01795 842 575.

[kent-life.co.uk](http://kent-life.co.uk) [kentnews.co.uk](http://kentnews.co.uk)



# Book now... for Christmas

## Monster offer for monster ball

THE Monster Christmas Ball, now in its fifth year, is taking bookings for the 2014 Christmas Party season.

One all-inclusive ticket price includes arrival drinks, Christmas dinner, wine with your meal and an evening's entertainment including live music, DJ and the Monster Christmas Ball Casino.

This is all set within a purpose-built Christmas venue available for large group bookings and shared party nights.

Visit [www.kentchristmasparty.com](http://www.kentchristmasparty.com) for dates and further information or phone the booking office on 01227 701042.



## Countryside retreat combines ancient with a modern twist for the perfect rural venue

**WELCOME** to the Anchor and Hope public house in the village of Ash, about two miles from Brands Hatch racing circuit and four miles from Bluewater.

The Anchor & Hope is an independent country pub run and owned by Emma Pearson and Benjamin Eldridge.

Along with a great team of people, our aim is to ensure you have a good time, whatever your reason for visiting us.

Recently refurbished, our pub and restaurant combines a modern contemporary feel with the beauty of a 16th-century coaching inn.

We have an extensive range of beers, wines and spirits and three well-kept real ales for those of you who enjoy a good pint.

If you are looking to dine with us, then we have both a bar menu or a restaurant menu from which you can choose.

We have a large patio area to the

front and side of the pub and a very large garden.

There is also plenty of parking, so whatever your reason – a holiday or day out in Kent, a shopping trip to Bluewater, or a trip to Brands Hatch – why don't you pop in and see us?

You can even stay the night in one of our en-suite bedrooms.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Anchor and Hope in the near future.

## Hotel chain offers exciting range of events to cater for all your party needs, and you can stay the night

LEAF Hotels in east Kent has an exciting range of Christmas events including Christmas parties and festive lunches

One can choose to hold their Christmas celebration at Harbledown at the Holiday Inn Express Canterbury, the Ramada Dover and the Best Western Plus Dover Marina Hotel & Spa, with all venues offering free car parking and able to cater for small and large parties

Prices range from £14.95 per

person for Christmas Fayre Lunches at the Holiday Inn Express Canterbury to the Ramada Dover Party nights starting at £26.95 and a traditional Christmas Day Lunch at the Best Western Plus Dover Marina Hotel & Spa at £72.95

The Christmas parties include a three-course meal and dancing, while the Festive Fayre Lunches include a three-course Christmas Lunch together with the festive decorations

A special 10 per cent discount applies to bookings made and deposit paid prior to August 31.

Special bed and breakfast accommodation rates for attendees at Christmas parties are available from £49 per room at the Holiday Inn Express Canterbury through to £69 per standard room at the Ramada Dover and the Best Western Plus Dover Marina Hotel & Spa.

All Leaf hotels offer Christmas Eve Dinner, Christmas Day Lunch &

Dinner, Boxing Day Lunch & Dinner and a New Year's Eve Dinner Dance.

To avoid disappointment, it is recommended to book early.

For bookings:

- Holiday Inn Express Canterbury (01227 865000, [www.hiexpresscanterbury.co.uk](http://www.hiexpresscanterbury.co.uk))
- Ramada Dover (01304 821230, [www.ramadadover.co.uk](http://www.ramadadover.co.uk))
- Best Western Plus Dover Marina Hotel & Spa (01304 203633, [www.dovermarinahotel.co.uk](http://www.dovermarinahotel.co.uk))



## Rip-roaring time and home-cooked food is promised when you visit The Red Lion

THE Red Lion in Sittingbourne is now taking Christmas bookings for 2014.

The Red Lion offers fabulous home-cooked food, using local butchers and suppliers, at very competitive prices.

All of our meats come from local award-winning butchers, Doughty's of Doddington, plus a good selection of fresh, local vegetables to accompany your Christmas meal.

The Red Lion offers a superb selection of fine wines at competitive

prices and a varied selection of cask ales, including some seasonal temptations to get you into the Christmas spirit.

We pride ourselves at The Red Lion on offering you the best service in our beautiful 14th-century Inn.

The restaurant is lit up during the winter by candlelight and a rip-roaring fire, creating a special festive atmosphere that is perfect for any work Christmas party, or just friends or family wanting to get

together at Christmas.

### LANDLORD'S SPECIAL OFFER

A bottle of wine of your choice, per every four people.

Book early for Friday and Saturday nights and enjoy our live music after your Christmas meal.

Phone us on 01795 472706 to book now or to receive a menu in the post. Menus are also available to view on our website at [www.theredlion-inn.co.uk](http://www.theredlion-inn.co.uk).





## Restaurant chain a Fyne example of doing it right

Shopping around for a good meal, **David Mairs** was delighted to discover an establishment with an excellent reputation really is still cooking up a treat

**L**OCH FYNE enjoys an enviable reputation in a way many food chains do not.

In fairness to those that don't, the simple fact they are chains invariably works against them, regardless of the actual quality of their food.

By the same token, a chain restaurant needs to work that touch harder to establish a good name among the dining public, particularly the food snobs among its number.

The more outlets you have, the more difficult the job to establish and, perhaps tougher still, maintain a reputation.

After all, it makes for an awful lot of meals to be served, with the potential for any one of them to go wrong – and, if there's any area where food can go violently the wrong way, it's fish.

As such, we can but applaud the manner in which Loch Fyne has so boldly, imaginatively and, perhaps

above all, successfully taken on the challenge.

The company shows a commendable attitude to sustainability and, again, seafood is an area where this is critical.

It also knows a thing or two about the importance of seasonal variation in the menu. It goes without saying that now is the

**“Some things and some places are too tempting to avoid, and so I gleefully visited Loch Fyne”**

time of its spring and summer menu... and it's really rather good. Among the dishes highlighted by Loch Fyne itself are home-made fish soup with Gruyère and salt-cod brandade croutons, an apple-and-crevette salad with a tarragon dressing and fresh summer fruits with lemon panna cotta.

There have also been some changes to the two-course set menu. New dishes include king-prawn-and-squid spaghetti with sun-dried tomato, wild rocket and tapenade, a seasonal whole fish and the return of the summer favourite Bradan Rost (salmon cured with salt and brown sugar and then smoked for 12 hours before being roast) salad with pear, pumpkin seed and butternut squash.

Some things and some places are too tempting to avoid, and so I gleefully visited the Loch Fyne restaurant at Bluewater with expectations high.

And a wonderful experience followed.

I ate alfresco close to a lake complete with fountain and simply took the advice of the knowledgeable and friendly waiter (whose name I have sadly mislaid) and enjoyed a delightful meal in delightful conditions.

I could have been in the south of

France just as easily as in one the country's largest shopping centres.

To start, I had chilli-and-garlic king prawns pan-fried in lemon oil with granary bread – a favourite. I was assured, and I could see why.

For main it was whole-grilled sea bass with sautéed potatoes and chilli jam, alongside French fries and pan-fried samphire in garlic butter. Exquisite!

The level of excellence never once dipped and I wound up with passion-fruit cheesecake and passion-fruit-and-mango sorbet, the whole glorious occasion set to the seducing tone of a glass of Savino Pinot Grigio.

Perhaps it was partly my summery mood, but it was difficult to imagine how any part of the meal could have been bettered.

Loch Fyne sets its bar high from the start and it continues to soar over and above. Happy days.

■ **Loch Fyne**, West Village, Bluewater, DA9 9SE (telephone 01322 623930)



# The Hare left me hopping with delight

## The Hare

**Location:** Tunbridge Wells

**By Maria Chiorando**

**L**OCATED in the leafy environs of Tunbridge Wells, next to a charming church, and even featuring a perfect Labrador playing fetch with a tennis ball in the field next door, The Hare is a quintessentially English establishment.

And it trades well on its old English heritage. The bar is well stocked with a variety supply of spirits: all the usual suspects, then some more artisan brands.

There is also a fine range of ales on tap and a more than adequate wine list divided by style, for example 'warm and spicy'.

This is a neat touch and allows the drinker to confidently choose what they are looking for.

We chose a medium-priced Rioja

and it didn't disappoint.

The menu reflects this commitment to our fair isle, with dishes showcasing classics like lamb, asparagus and beer-battered haddock and chips.

There are some unexpected twists, though... a Malaysian fish stew or five-spiced duck legs.

The menu was comprehensive without being worryingly expansive and disparate.

In a fit of gluttony, we decided on three courses, which, given the large portion sizes, was rash.

The menu points out that the mezze board can serve two as a meal, and indeed as a starter for two it was a touch excessive.

It's a perfectly well-assembled and generously-portioned platter of artichoke, stuffed bell peppers, sun-

blushed tomatoes, olives, houmous, falafels, courgette fritters and pitta bread.

No surprises there, and everything was of a decent standard – no single element stood out, while the fritters could have used a slightly higher batter-to-vegetable ratio. It was an enjoyable and well-priced dish.

The main courses were also on the larger side.

The braised shoulder of lamb, with dauphinoise potatoes, petit pois and a mint jus was a well-balanced plate.

The meat was meltingly tender and sat well with the sweetness of the peas and the rich dauphinoise.

The dauphinoise were a good example of a dish that's often done badly.

They stood up in a stack, as they should, and were not complicated

with any unnecessary ingredients, which is so often the case.

The only real criticism here was the mint, which was perhaps too subtle – a stronger mint flavour would have enhanced the dish.

The sweet potato, aubergine and spinach curry with coconut rice and coriander-fried okra was a solid vegetarian option.

It was certainly tasty and hearty, but the unctuous sauce totally submerged the rice, which had been shaped into a small orb.

The proportions were slightly off, and the plate would have benefited from less curry, or different presentation, as it turned soupy, the rice lost in the depth of the liquid.

Pudding was a crème brûlée, which was delicious, though someone had been a little over-eager

with the blowtorch – the crust would have benefited from being a little thinner.

A blackcurrent sorbet was perfect and rounded off a rich meal well.

The only low point was the coffee: mindful of my drive home, I ordered a double espresso, my fellow diner a single.

It was watery with no crema, and the double was a longer coffee rather than an extra shot.

But this was a drop in the ocean of what was a good meal. The service must also be commended as efficient and friendly.

Overall, highly recommended. The bill came to just shy of £75.

■ **The Hare**  
Langton Road, Langton Green  
Tunbridge Wells TN3 0JA  
(phone 01892 862419)



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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

## Lessons could be learned from past

I REALLY enjoyed your article about the Gravesend to Tilbury ferry (KoS, 13/07).

As someone who grew up in the 1960s, it has been sad watching the ferry's decline.

There were some really strange short-sighted transport decisions during that period, notably the Beeching axe for the railways, but scrapping the car ferry while leaving the passenger one was just as bad.

Cars can't be transported on foot passenger ferries, but foot passengers can certainly be taken on car ferries.

The decision that all would be well once the Dartford tunnel was built and there would be no need for a car ferry proved disastrous.

If this service was still in operation these days it would be prospering.

Sometimes, like with the railways and trams, you need to go back to go forward. Perhaps some new infrastructure for a car ferry would be preferable to spending billions on new bridges and tunnels that will rip up and cause chaos to this part of Kent for years to come.

**Paul Harrison, Gravesend**

## London viewpoint blind to solution

READING the July 13 edition of KoS, I was struck by two related articles: the on-again, off-again story of the Thames estuary airport and the demise (again) of Manston Airport.

I have been saying for years why don't they develop Manston.

To build an airport on Grain or in the estuary would need huge foundations to make sure the whole thing didn't sink into the mud, plus roads, a rail link, airport buildings, runways and hotels – not to mention blowing up the SS Montgomery.

Manston, though, already has a runway and the basic building blocks of an airport.

So why has this site never been developed? I would suggest it is the London-centric viewpoint of the developers who see the depths of Kent as being much further away from London than they really are.

**Dana Adler, Chatham**

## Memorial would be a fitting tribute

I AGREE we should erect lasting memorials to those who gave their lives for their country 100 years ago (KoS Letters, last week).

And funding by donations is

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## KCC failings there in black and white, sir

I WRITE in relation to Kent County Council's education chief Roger Gough, who in last week's KoS responded to my article that had appeared the previous week.

My article highlighted the appalling standard of primary school Ofsted outcomes in Kent. It linked these to the sharp increase in primary headship vacancies in the county, the difficulty in filling these positions and the brutal manner in which too many heads are removed from their posts, which is creating a climate in which Kent primary heads fear for their jobs while deputy headteachers are having second thoughts about placing themselves in the firing line, all leading to a sharp fall in morale.

Mr Gough will be aware of the motion passed at the recent National Association of Headteachers' Conference that stated: "Conference calls upon the national executive to highlight the number of school leaders being forced from their posts through spurious and unacceptable means by the bullying actions of some local authorities who seek to remove experienced and skilled headteachers to make way for academy sponsorship or other forms of school governance."

This motion was proposed by the Kent branch.

This hardly chimes with the support he claims is coming from headteachers for the way the county goes about changing school leadership for the good of the schools and is a complete

vindication of my argument.

Neither does he address my crucial point that, after the changes, so many primary schools are left without permanent full-time leadership for too long, only contributing to the problem.

With regard to Ofsted inspection outcomes, I was very careful to distinguish between the poor primary outcomes and the excellent secondary and special school results.

Mr Gough makes no reference to the 16 (now 17) primary schools that have failed their Ofsted since September, over three times the national average.

He makes no reference to the fact more Kent primary schools have seen a fall in Ofsted rating since September than have improved.

He also makes no reference to the fact that Kent, last year 133rd among 151 local authorities for primary school Ofsted outcomes, has seen a further decline in performance this year, with 53 per cent of Kent's primary schools being classified 'good' or 'outstanding' against a national percentage of 59 per cent.

Instead he chooses to ignore these dreadful statistics.

How on earth are we to see the situation improve if Kent County Council flatly refuses to acknowledge the scale of the problem it has brought about?

**Peter Read, Kent Education Advice, Gravesend**

definitely the best way to go.

I suppose there are those who objected to the Cenotaph being put up in Whitehall, but just look at the result of that now.

I think giving a memorial to the arch fund in Folkestone will reinforce our gratitude to those who made the ultimate sacrifice and a crowning glory to those brave souls whom it commemorates.

**Patricia Erricker, Dover**

## Drive-by killer left me heartbroken

ON Monday, July 14, at about 6pm, in Oaklands Avenue, St Peter's, I pulled over to let a car pass.

It slowly and purposely headed towards a seagull in the road and continued to run over the top of it.

I jumped out of my car and was screaming at the individual, an older gentleman in his 60s with his wife in the car. They blankly chose not to make eye contact with me and continued down the road.

The seagull was in shock and the car had left it paralysed.

I had to take the horrifically-injured bird to the vets to be put down. I was absolutely heartbroken.

I want the person who did this to realise what they've done. You may not feel remorse for killing in cold blood, but you could feel remorse for leaving a 30-year-old hysterical in the road. You clearly have no heart.

**Lucy Glover-Short, Ramsgate**

## Decision to call time was wrong

SOME time ago, local residents were sent details of a planning application to scrap the telephone box at the top of St John's Hill in Sevenoaks.

People who wrote in about this received no reply from the council (the council normally replies to objections to planning applications) yet now it has disappeared without further warning.

Three points seem to arise from this:

- it is wrong this has been done without objectors being notified.
- is it right any property-owner should be able to demand the cessation of a public service because they don't like it being sited outside his premises?
- this facility was necessary a few years ago when a number of home phone lines went dead.

BT must do better but in any case should not have policy dictated by property-owners, as has happened here.

**John Humphrey, Sevenoaks**

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise." This is summed up in the strapline "Inspiring Communities".

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles: **Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between

news, comment and advertising.

- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
- 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
- 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.





## Guildhall at Faversham

by **Brian Summer**  
from Faversham

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## Women Seeking

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**FEMALE** 38, attractive, African, single mum, seeks male, 35-50 for nights out, socialising, friendship and fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412793

**PETITE** slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327

**MAUREEN**, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1961 Box No: 405297

**WIDOW** 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475

**KATIE** 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319

**ANNA**, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box No: 366019

**JANE** 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTm not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315

**MARY** 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTm likeminded caring, happy male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169

**CHRISTINA**, curvy beauty, 27yrs, own home, very adventurous, seeks no strings fun and frolics. Can accommodate and will answer all calls. Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box No: 410127

**CLARE** 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. Tel No: 412053

**SHARON** 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412049

**BLONDE** pretty, long legged, voluptuous, blue eyes, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410585

**SAM**, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box No: 408297

**SLIM** petite, attractive brunette, 56. British/Russian origin, excellent cook/home maker, seeks cultured male for serious relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412129

**FREYA** 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/dad for dates, chats and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045

**SUSIE**, married, adventurous/dominant lady, 38yrs, seeks discreet man any age/area for no strings fun. Tel No: 0905 002 1945 Box No: 412285

**MARILYN** really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418771

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**JAN** 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865

**SARAH** 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTm similar fun genuine guy. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537

**JULIE** attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTm someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513

**LADY** 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 41301

**CATHY** happy independent female looking for her soul mate, someone to spend quality time but who also likes their own space. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409909

**LINDA** 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033

**CAROLINE** 39yr old pretty blonde looking for handsome caring man to put the sparkle back into my life and make each other feel special. Call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411891

**33YR** old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887

**CINDY** 31 attractive, size 12 brown eyed blonde, new to this but sick of passing up potential soul mate so thought I'd give it a go. ACA Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411873

**RITA** divorced care worker with no ties, 5ft 11ins, dark hair, enjoys meals out, cosy nights in, seeking male 45-55 with GSOH and similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411775

**JANET** 5ft 8ins, slim 12, pretty, green eyes, brown hair, seeking male companion for friendship hopefully leading to a relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411689

**MELANIE** tall curvy attractive bubbly female who loves meals out, cosy nights in with a nice wine, walking, seeks professional male with outgoing GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411509

**LYN** 34yrs, pretty petite dark haired female, loves music, meals out, quiet drinks out, seeking caring male with GSOH who can make me feel special again. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410137

**CAROLINE** blonde curvy very active lady who loves to socialise, countryside, seeking similar caring male for LTR and to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409413

**RACHEL** 39, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 6ins, bubbly, outgoing, naughty, busty, divorced, seeks male for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410635

**SUE** optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467

**CATHY** very much a lady seeks gent up to 62yrs who would appreciate an independent professional classy female who loves to be wined, dined and romanced. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410301

**SUSAN** seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779

**59YR** old Kent lady, bubbly, large build, dog lover, easygoing, GSOH, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403071

**CATHY** happy independent female looking for her soul mate, someone to spend quality time but who also likes their own space. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409909

**MARIE** 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/active, WLTm fun loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037

**SOPHIE** 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs. GSOH essential. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717

**34YR** single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709

**RACHAEL** 36yr old nurse looking to raise the temperature of reliable sincere male. I have my OACH, a single mum to 1, love gym, cosy meals, animals etc. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411045

**SATURDAY** night blues! Home alone again and looking for male companionship. blonde, slim, 32yrs, attractive, what are you waiting for? call me if you're normal and lovely. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408867

## Men Seeking

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mydate24

**LOCAL** man wishes to meet nice lady for fun/friendship with a view to possible relationship. Respond if interested. Sevenoaks. Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4334837

**RETIRED** male, seeks attractive female for friendship and fun, any age/status/colour. East Kent, can travel. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413133

**AMABLE** intelligent male, 77, light smoker, seeks slim lady for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413127

**MATURE** male, looking for discreet meetings with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413039

**FRANK** 54, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, blond hair, smoker, seeking friendship with mature female, 40-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412893

**COMPANY** Director, mature, late 50's, seeking female, any age for mutually rewarding friendship. Kent/Surrey area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412819

**IAN** 5ft 11ins, likes rock/roll, singing, making people laugh, seeking someone special. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412799

**WRITER** tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749

**BARRY** divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717

**MALE** seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703

**SINGLE** young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

**MALE** 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212

**JAMES** young, free and single, please give me a call if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412345

**EX** headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263

**MALE** 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235

**BESIDE** the Pointe. Literate self-possessed, legless, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223

**45YR** old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship. Herne Bay area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993

**CHIPS** on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725

**MALE** 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477

**DEREK** seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433

**SUSAN** 29 green eyes, dark hair, slim, looking for Mr tall dark and handsome to take me out, enjoy adult times without complications just fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410957

**KAREN** blonde blue eyed slim 35yr old interesting female looking for good times, call me if I am in a similar situation, board and looking for some fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410719

**JANE** pretty size 12, loves going out socialising, countryside, meals out, looking for no strings fun, nothing heavy, give me a call if you are seeking similar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410579

**SUE** 32 blonde blue eyed curvy nurse, caring, loving romantic, faithful, likes cosy nights in with a nice wine and lovely man, if that's you, call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410571

**FLOR** beautiful educated European blonde, articulate, seeking similar intelligent well-mannered mature gent to enjoy socialising, conversing and quality times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408293

**DAVE** 65, retired, N/S, likes gardening, music, meals out, holidays, seeks female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410971

**DAVE** 62, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired builder, seeks no strings discreet daytime meets for adult fun. Surrey. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410899

**MALE** likes outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755

**BRIAN** 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

**DEREK** 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511

**EARLY** 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441

**41YR** old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411

**BROWN** eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

**PHIL** 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351

**RETIRED** male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343

**CANTERBURY** mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405957



**ADVENTUROUS** male, mid 50's, seeks similar lady for fun and mutually enjoyable discreet relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410339

**CHRIS** widower likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

**MALE** seeking female to love and be loved back. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408941

**FIT** fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408587

**CHRIS** 52, slim, looking for female, 25-38, slim, 5ft 2ins plus for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408575

**DAVE** 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541

**ADAM** 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421

**DAVE** 50, seeks female of similar age for meals out, holidays etc. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408415

**RETIRED** male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Midway area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408343

**MALE** 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855

**STEVE** 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homely, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835

**ANTHONY** 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355

**71YR** old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277

**MALE** seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189

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## Eurotunnel revenue rise as ferry firm losses rise

By Chris Britcher

[chris.britcher@archant.co.uk](mailto:chris.britcher@archant.co.uk)

EUROTUNNEL has seen another sharp increase in traffic, with revenues up 8 per cent and a growth in both passengers of high-speed trains and freight trains.

Revenues went up by some 8 per cent to 559 million euros (£441.5m), with earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) up 6 per cent to 216m euros (£170m).

However, the group's chief executive Jacques Gounon admitted "the most likely scenario" was that the MyFerryLink service, which Eurotunnel owns and operates between Dover and Calais, will have to be stopped by the end of the year.

That follows a ruling from the UK competitions watchdog that it was an unfair competitor in the cross-Channel market, given Eurotunnel's dominance of alternative routes.

Eurotunnel is appealing the ruling and, for now at least, the ferry operation continues as normal.

In its financial statement, the com-



ON THE UP: Eurotunnel revenues

pany said of its ferry service: "Freight traffic has leapt by 30 per cent despite the series of negative announcements from the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA), which is a clear indication of customer support for MyFerryLink."

"For cars, a continuing lack of awareness of MyFerryLink is slowing its progression. It is on behalf of the

customers who are attracted in significant numbers to the quality service offered by this maritime operator that Eurotunnel is appealing the prohibition, decreed by the CMA, from operating out of Dover.

"This decision, if it is confirmed, would lead immediately to a reduction in consumer choice across the Channel and would probably increase prices for consumers."

In the first half of the year, the ferry firm lost some 14m euros, which went a long way to contributing to the overall 11m loss Eurotunnel experienced.

It would add some weight to the argument of cross-Channel competitors that claim Eurotunnel can operate MyFerryLink at a loss to artificially drive down prices to squeeze out rivals.

Added M Gounon: "All areas of our business are growing. The fixed link [tunnel] achieved a record level of operating margin in a very active cross-Channel market."

A decision on MyFerryLink, which acquired the assets of SeaFrance when it went bust, is expected later this year.

## £10m UTC gets planning nod

PLANNING permission has been granted for the construction of the £10 million Medway University Technical College, the new engineering-focused secondary school opening to students in Gravesend, Maidstone, Medway, Tonbridge and Malling and Swale.

On a 0.8-hectare site at the Chatham Waters development, if work all goes to plan the school will open for students aged 14-19 in September 2015.

## Pub completes £1.2m refurb

PUB chain giant JD Wetherspoon has opened a new outlet on Sheppey.

The Belle and Lion in Sheerness High Street was given planning permission back in February and is now open for business.

It follows a £1.2 million refurbishment of the former Brittain and Hobbs shop which the pub now occupies.

Around 60 jobs have been created as a consequence.

## Interest-free loans to firms with fewer than 50 employees

KENT County Council is urging small businesses in east Kent to take advantage of a zero per cent interest loan being offered.

The loan comes from the Small Business Boost fund, part of the Expansion East Kent programme.

KCC is hoping dozens of small businesses – with fewer than 50 staff – will benefit from loans of up to £50,000.

The Small Business Boost has been created to help start-ups and existing businesses that have been trading for less than six years.

KCC leader Paul Carter launched the scheme at an event in Folkestone on Wednesday morning.

Cllr Carter said: "This offer of interest-free loans is aimed at providing a massive boost to small firms, entrepreneurs and start-ups to support business, generate jobs and grow the east Kent economy."

"Over the past year we've had tremendous success in backing medium and larger-scale businesses – creating thousands of extra jobs across the whole region."

"Now we want to focus on helping smaller operations for whom zero-rate finance can prove a vital stepping stone to expansion and unlocking private-sector finance."

"The intelligent use of funding means we can recycle the money to provide vital business support on an ongoing basis, benefitting local firms and creating local jobs for years to come."

Adds Jacqui Ward, regional growth fund manager at KCC: "Expansion East Kent welcomes small businesses to the scheme and looks forward to receiving and awarding loans to a range of companies so they can create more jobs opportunities."

Kent County Council has three Regional Growth Fund programmes operating across Kent – Expansion East Kent, Tiger and Escalate. See its website for details.

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## Warner Leisure Hotels Premium Private Party Breaks

### Swinging Sixties Christmas Party

£229<sup>pp</sup> 3 nights, Friday 28 November, 2014

**£10<sup>pp</sup>**  
**DEPOSIT**

**Warner**  
Norton Grange  
Isle of Wight

**FREE DRINKS**  
6pm to Midnight  
every night

**The**  
Fourmost

**Little**  
Miss  
Sixties



Great Entertainment, Free Drinks, Free Car Ferry and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight, our most popular Christmas Party venue ever.

**INCLUDED:** Free Bar from 6pm to midnight every evening for house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers ● Entertainment ● 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts ● 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available ● Car ferry crossing worth £45

**Quote SS11-KOS**

### Mamma Mia & Super 70s Carry on New Year Party

£229<sup>pp</sup> 3 nights, Friday 9 January, 2015

**£10<sup>pp</sup>**  
**DEPOSIT**

**Warner**  
Bembridge Hotel  
Isle of Wight

**FREE DRINKS**  
6pm to Midnight  
every night

**Rock Stewart**  
& Ultimate  
Elton

**MAMMA**  
MIA THE  
MOVIE

**ABBA**  
Tribute  
Band

**Come Dancing Party**



If you're a dance fan who enjoys ballroom & latin dancing, you'll love our popular Come Dancing Party, running alongside the Carry on New Year Party - add dance tuition, a Gala Ball, a huge dance floor with reserved table & seating and much more for just £50<sup>pp</sup> extra.

Our private party extends the New Year festivities and takes us on a trip down memory lane at our favourite Warner hotel. Enjoy a gala New Year's Eve party with countdown to midnight and great entertainment.

**INCLUDED:** Free Bar from 6pm to midnight every night for house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers ● Entertainment ● 3 dinners & 3



**Quote BE1-KOS**

breakfasts ● 3 nights en-suite **CHALET** - hotel upgrades available with rooms in main building from £259<sup>pp</sup> ● Car ferry crossing worth £45

### Swinging Sixties Fab Feb Party

£209<sup>pp</sup> 3 nights, Friday 6 February, 2015

**£10<sup>pp</sup>**  
**DEPOSIT**

**Warner**  
Corton  
Suffolk Coast

**FREE DRINKS**  
6pm to Midnight  
every night

**The**  
Fortunes

**Union**  
Gap

**Frankie Valli**  
& Friends  
tribute



Great Entertainment, Free Drinks, good food and a super location by the sea near Lowestoft in Suffolk make Warner's Corton Coastal Holiday Village a great party venue.

**INCLUDED:** Free Bar from 6pm to midnight every evening for house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers ● Entertainment ● 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts ● 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available

**Quote CW2-KOS**

## Classic Private Party Breaks - Pontins Pakefield

### SWINGING 60s CHRISTMAS PARTY

£129<sup>pp</sup> 3 nights half board plus Friday 14 November, 2014

**£10<sup>pp</sup>**  
**DEPOSIT**



**Marmalade**  
The Dakotas

**New Amen Corner**  
Free Drinks

Join us for a cool weekend of swinging 60s sounds at Pontins seaside resort near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Groove to some great original 60s bands at an entertainment packed weekend break. You'll also enjoy 3 free drinks per person per night.

**INCLUDED:** 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers ● Full entertainment programme ● 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available ● 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners

**Quote US11-KOS**

### SUPER 70s CHRISTMAS PARTY

£129<sup>pp</sup> 3 nights half board plus Friday 21 November, 2014

**£10<sup>pp</sup>**  
**DEPOSIT**

**Alvin**  
Stardust

**Abba Tribute**  
Free Drinks

**Rod Stewart Tribute**  
Frankie Valli Tribute



Join us for a cool weekend of swinging 70s sounds at Pontins seaside resort near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Enjoy an entertainment packed weekend with leather-clad 70s rocker Alvin Stardust performing live and our Abba-themed Christmas Party. You'll also enjoy 3 free drinks per person per night.

**INCLUDED:** 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers ● Full entertainment programme ● 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available ● 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners

**Quote MS11-KOS**

### SPRING BACK TO THE 60s PARTY

£129<sup>pp</sup> 3 nights half board plus Friday 13 March, 2015

**£10<sup>pp</sup>**  
**DEPOSIT**

**The Tremeloes**  
The Beatles Experience

**Buddy Holly Tribute**  
Free Drinks

**Swinging Blue Jeans**  
Dave Grant of Paper Lace



**Quote US3-KOS**

Join us for a party weekend to remember as we Spring Back to the 60s with a packed entertainment programme of original sounds and top tributes. Add to this the great location of Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk, and 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

**INCLUDED:** 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers ● Full entertainment programme ● 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available ● 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners

## Bosworth Hall Hotel Summer Late Deals



**4 nights**  
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**only**  
**£129<sup>pp</sup>**

Bosworth Hall is a super country house hotel located in the heart of the English countryside in the village of Market Bosworth, Leicestershire. Dating back to the 17th century, this beautiful Grade II Listed mansion is set in landscaped gardens.

All the en-suite bedrooms are decorated with individual yet, traditional style. They all include TV, telephone, trouser press and tea & coffee making facilities.

The hotel also boasts a leisure club complete with fully-equipped gym and indoor pool (£4 per day payable at the hotel).

**INCLUDED:**

- 4 nights hotel stay sharing a twin or double-bedded en-suite room
- 4 dinners & 4 breakfasts

**Arrive**  
**Mondays**  
**4th & 11th**  
**August, 2014**

**Quote: BH8-KOS**



By Steve Loader  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

## Update

### Renault Zoe

Price:	£18,443
Driving appeal:	★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	Nissan Leaf

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KENT LIFE

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**ELECTRIC DREAMS:** The Zoe is a car that many will want to buy through genuine desire rather than simply the wish to be seen to be green

French marque looked to be on the slide in the UK but has rebuilt its fortunes inside just two years

# Renault is roaring back up ratings

**T**HINGS looked ominous for Renault in the UK after 2012. The French brand had slashed its model line-up and dealers were understandably nervous at the way its budget stablemate Dacia was being promoted to fill some of the gaps.

Just two years on, though, and the wisdom of this strategy is clear: Renault and Dacia have just posted a half-year sales total for 2014 exceeding the 55,685 units the pair sold during the whole of 2012.

And while newbie Dacia's 1 per cent market share is almost double what it was last year, the more established Renault's 2.5 per cent still represents a 61 per cent boost, with the prospect of even more growth by year-end due to the imminent arrival of the all-new Traffic van and Twingo city car.

For now, demand has been heightened by Renault Summer Season offers – packages including customisation deals with tow-bars and bike-racks and 20 per cent discounts on other accessories.

The marque also upped its everyday offering recently with a four-year/100,000 warranty package – still short of what Hyundai, Kia and Toyota offer but better than the market norm.

But there's no doubt that Renault's rebirth is being driven by cars that people really want to be seen in, a philosophy that rescued the

company before and is now echoed by the latest Clio supermini (from £10,795) and all-new Captur crossover (from £12,495).

The original Clio – also famous for its quirky TV ad and music – was a lifesaver then and its latest successor is doing a similar job, while the Captur is arguably the market's most stylish crossover-cum-pseudo SUV.

But Renault has now cast itself as the champion of electric power, too, with impressive contenders in both the commercial arena – in the form of the Kangoo ZE light van (from £12,995 ex VAT) – and Zoe city car (from £18,443 after the Government's £5,000 grant).

The five-door Zoe's styling is proof that electric cars don't need to look like they've been smacked by a giant frying pan, and Renault has made it as appealing to the pocket as it can.

The result is a car that you might aspire to irrespective of whether it's green or not – a contentious point here in the UK anyway, when most of our electricity comes with fossil-fuel emissions as baggage.

Renault also sweetens the deal with a free domestic charging point with

fast-charging option and a four-year purchase deal of £174 per month, including £45 per month mandatory battery hire, and following a £2,750 deposit contribution.

Renault claims it costs less than two pence per mile to run and its 130-mile range is the longest of any mainstream electric car. However, the latter figure depends on the weather – low temperatures sap battery power – and how you drive the Zoe.

With a respectable 87bhp of electric pulling power available instantly across the range, this little car can be fun, particularly in cut-and-thrust town traffic.

It also handles well, even if battery weight make it feel a bit ponderous on corners, but you'll soon hammer the range if you exploit the car's chirpy nature.

It's also practical and the closest yet to an electric car you can buy from genuine desire rather than wanting to be seen to be green.

## Other view...

### the Petrolhead

I don't care if the Zoe looks better than other electric cars – none deliver on their green claims and they are dull to drive

### She says

The Zoe really is cute in a great Renault tradition and I would consider it, even at a price higher than a conventional small car

### the Eco-warrior

Zero emissions are good, but electric cars like the Zoe are a blind alley until we overhaul our electricity generation in the UK





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RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE MEDIANAV 1.2 16V 75 REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE

48 monthly payments of	£159	Total amount of credit	£10,705	Total amount payable	£15,378
Customer deposit	£990	Finance facility fee	£99	Duration	49 m
Cash price	£13,195	Optional final payment	£5008	Fixed interest rate p.a.	6.12%
Dealer deposit contribution	£1500	Option to purchase fee	£149	6.9% APR representative	



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BOOK A TEST DRIVE



The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the cars shown (excluding ZOE) are: Urban 40.4 (7)–47 (6); Extra Urban 60.1 (4.7)–64.02 (4.4); Combined 51.4 (5.5)–56.49 (5). The official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are 127–115g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors. Renault ZOE CO<sub>2</sub> while driving: 0, mpg: n/a.

**4+** Terms and exclusions apply. 4+ package available to non-business customers on new Renault vehicles. Warranty 4 years/100,000 miles and routine servicing 4 years/48,000 miles (whichever comes first). Servicing package available to Renault Selections customers only; alternatively can be purchased for just £299. Visit [renault.co.uk/4plus](http://renault.co.uk/4plus) for full details.

Finance provided by RCI Financial Services Limited, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. You must be at least 18 and a UK resident (excluding the Isle of Man and Channel Islands). Offer based on 6000 miles pa, excess mileage 8p per mile inc VAT. Terms and conditions apply. Our dealership introduces customers to a limited number of financial providers including RCI Financial Services Ltd.

\*£2750 deposit contribution is available to new Renault Finance customers when taking Renault Finance on a new Renault ZOE (excluding ZOE Expression). £1500 deposit contribution is available to new Renault Finance customers when taking Renault Finance on a new Renault Clio (excluding Clio Expression and Renaultsport). £1000 deposit contribution is available to new Renault Finance customers when taking Renault Finance on a new Renault Captur.

\*\*If you purchase your new Renault on Renault Selections, you will be eligible to receive a £500 contribution from Renault towards the purchase of your next new Renault vehicle. The contribution voucher will be available to download six months after the commencement date of your Renault Selections contract.

†Renault ZOE offer includes the UK government's plug-in car grant (PiCG). ZOE monthly payment of £174 set out above includes a credit repayment of £129 per month and a separate mandatory battery hire repayment of £45 per month, based on 750 miles per calendar quarter, excess miles 30p per mile including VAT. Minimum duration 12 months. You will not own the battery. Visit [renault.co.uk/zoe](http://renault.co.uk/zoe) for full terms and conditions.

Offers cannot be used with other schemes or finance offers and are available on specified new vehicles when ordered and registered by 30 September 2014. Clio shown has optional metallic paint, available at an additional £595. Captur shown has optional i.d. metallic paint at £495 and painted roof at £399.



The original Toyota Auris was simply a Corolla with a shinier name – however, its successor has got far more edge and appeal, as **Steve Loader** discovered...



**SMART:** Toyota's current Auris is more stylish than its predecessors and now comes in a rakish yet roomy Touring Sports format – better known as an estate

**E**IGHT years ago, Toyota axed the Corolla name in the UK and Europe. By motor-industry standards this was epic stuff; the Corolla name had appeared on more cars than any other in automotive history and made Toyota the world's number one carmaker.

By Toyota's staid standards, this was also risky, when its forte is making sensible, reliable, affordable and cheap-to-run motors.

So why do it? Well, British and European drivers do want cars that fit those criteria, but they also want dynamism and, if the Corolla name had been applied to footwear, it would have been on some slippers.

So the Corolla was replaced in 2006 by the Auris: great name, derived from the Latin name for gold – remember that dastardly James Bond villain Auric Goldfinger?

So the Auris set a new gold standard in the family hatchback sector and erased memories of the Corolla, right? Er, no...

It was actually pretty much business as usual. Despite a more European look, the Auris had all the usual Toyota virtues but was no more exciting.

However, British buyers could at least get pumped up by the fact that, like latter-day Corollas sold here, it was built in the UK at Toyota's huge plant near Derby.

And the Auris sold decently, though for all the usual Toyota reasons, until 2012, when the second-generation car arrived and, do you know what, people noticed.

The current car is far more

**kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk**

# Generation two 'Goldfinger car' getting tough

arresting to look at inside and out and even drives better while not yet approaching the sector's ruling trio on that front – the VW Golf, Ford Focus and Vauxhall Astra.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that the Mark II Auris is more stylish than all three, both in five-door hatch or all-new rakish yet roomy Touring Sports format – that's estate car to you and me.

True to form, Toyota has ensured that whatever version of the latest Auris you buy it will have all the established brand virtues that made the Corolla a world-beater.

Underpinning its appeal to the pocket is a range of engines that won't let you down on reliability or economy and have six-speed manual gearboxes as standard, starting with the entry-level 98bhp 1.33-litre petrol unit (52.3mpg on combined cycle), which enables pricing to start at a competitive £14,495.

For those wanting more oomph

and motorway refinement, there is the 130bhp 1.6-litre petrol (from £17,995) tested here; this is quiet and responsive and has an official combined cycle 47.9mpg.

For out and out economy, though, you have the choice of the 89bhp 1.4-litre diesel (74.3mpg combined and from £16,295) or petrol-electric hybrid (78.5mpg and from £20,645) – the latter's 87g/km CO<sub>2</sub> emissions figure also means zero road tax.

A previous road test of the hybrid showed how hard Toyota has worked to ensure that this paired powertrain plus batteries does not impinge on interior space and versatility.

But its lack-lustre CVT (continuously variable transmission) automatic gearbox – no manual choice here – affects the driving experience, even if you can average about 70mpg in the real world without much driver effort.

On balance, though, I prefer the

**KEA**

## Toyota Auris Icon Plus 1.6

Price:	£18,795
Driving appeal:	★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
Reliability:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Road tax:	£125/year
Best rival:	Kia Ceed

## Kent dealers

Motorline	
Ashford	0844 822 7122
Canterbury	0844 822 7131
Tun' Wells	0844 822 7171

1.6 petrol all-rounder, which allows the driver to exploit the best of the Auris driving characteristics; this generation couldn't be easier to drive but can also be hustled far more than before and has the sporting looks to match.

Build quality is rock solid, the dashboard well organised – with an impressive 6.1-inch Toyota Touch infotainment screen – and the cabin is spacious and versatile.

The whole package is backed by Toyota's five-year/100,000-mile warranty – one of the best.

## FirstGEAR

Motoring news



## Surging demand

SEAT continues to climb the UK sales chart, having posted record first half-year volumes for the third time consecutively, up by a fifth against the same period in 2013, and twice that of the UK market's overall trend.

Sales to private buyers were even better, rising by a third and largely through surging demand for the VW-owned Spanish marque's racy Ibiza supermini and impressive Leon family-hatchback line-ups.



## Cross Panda good

POUND for pound, Fiat already produces one of the best 4x4s available – the little five-door Panda 4x4.

But the Italian brand has now come up with a rougher, tougher sister, the Panda Cross (from £15,945) creating what Fiat calls "a proper off-road vehicle with the efficiency and practicality of a versatile city car" featuring such 'big 4x4' kit as an electronic locking differential and hill descent and terrain controls.



## Skoda's dark side

SKODA has blackened the name of every one of its eight models – by introducing 'Black Edition' versions with black exterior detailing and alloys (Yeti SUV pictured).

Priced from just £10,900 for the Citigo city-car version and based on already well-equipped SE models, these cars also come with DAB radio and sat-nav as standard to make them as attractive to the pocket as they are arresting to the eye.



Fiat with

# FASHIONABLY THRIFTY

Fashionista newsflash... The Fiat 500 Pop in Bossa Nova White comes with 14" steel wheels, electric front windows and electronically adjustable door mirrors. But timeless glamour and elegant gadgetry are only half the story. Just in... it's also fashionably more feasible – with some head-turning financing deals... don't wrap it – drive it home.

Representative example

FIAT 500 POP 1.2			
On the Road Price	£10,320	36 Monthly Payments	£129
Fiat Deposit Contribution	£500	Optional Final Payment (inc option fee of £285)	£5,038
Customer Deposit	£1,399	Total Amount Payable by Customer	£11,081
Amount of Credit	£8,421	Rate of Interest (Fixed)	4.89%
Duration of Contract	37 months	Representative 6.2% APR	

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Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500 range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 49.6 (5.7) – 64.2 (4.4); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) – 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (4.8) – 76.3 (3.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 113 – 90 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Terms & Conditions apply. Retail customers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offer. With Fiat i-Deal you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (A charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Offer subject to status. A guarantee or indemnity may be required. Fiat Financial Services, PO Box 4465, Slough SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors to provide finance to our customers, including Fiat Financial Services, July to September 2014 offer, Fiat Deposit Contribution available on Fiat 500 models, and is only available in conjunction with Fiat i-Deal Low Cost. Prices correct at time of printing. Offer may be varied and withdrawn at any time. Subject to availability.

9730

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Model shown: New Cherokee Limited £31,195 OTR. Promotion available on new Cherokee models registered before 30th September 2014. \*0% APR Representative Hire Purchase available for a 3 year term with a minimum deposit of 10% required. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and conditions apply. We work with a number of creditors including Jeep Financial Services, Jeep Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough SL1 0RW. New Cherokee will benefit from complimentary servicing to cover the car for 3 years or 30,000 miles including protection for the first MOT on all qualifying retail sales. At participating Dealers only.\* Fiat - Chrysler and CNH Industrial are Official Global Partners of the Expo Milano 2015. To find out more please visit [jeep.co.uk](http://jeep.co.uk). Prices and specifications correct at the time of going to print (07/14). Jeep is a registered trademark of Chrysler Group LLC.

66 Week ending July 27, 2014

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BUSINESS USERS ONLY. Finance provided by RCI Financial Services Ltd, Egale House, PO. Box 149, WD17 1FJ. Subject to status Guarantees and indemnities may be required. You must be 18 or over and a UK resident (excluding Isle of Man and Channel Islands). Contract Hire rates are based on 10,000 miles per annum and 36 months (3+35 rental). At the end of the contract you will not own the vehicle. Further charges may apply subject to mileage and condition at end of contract. Terms and conditions apply.

\*Contract hire rates exclude VAT and include delivery costs. Prices valid subject to no change in manufacturer's prices, residual values or interest rates. Non-maintenance offers available on new vans when ordered and registered by 30 September 2014. Terms and conditions apply visit [www.renault.co.uk/vans](http://www.renault.co.uk/vans) for details.

†Warranty applies to new vehicles up to a period of 4 years or 100,000 miles, whichever comes first (first 2 years unlimited mileage). Renault Assistance Roadside Cover is provided by our approved roadside assistance partners. Cover from months 0 to 36 (3+35) includes assistance at the roadside and home, national recovery, onward travel and European cover. Cover from months 37 to 48 includes Roadside and Homestart (including a local tow to an authorised Renault dealer).

\*\*EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> may vary according to driving style, road conditions and other factors.



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**Location: Medway Campus**

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Closing: 25/07/14

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The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancy for the following staff:

**Clinical Effectiveness Nurse – Margate**  
Part time Hours: 22.5 per week Closing date: 15/08/2014  
Salary: £28,000 pro rata

- Qualifications**
- Registered Nurse 1st level
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  - Experience of Clinical audit procedures

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:  
Mary Guarnieri, Ward Manager, on 01843 234252

For a job description and application form please visit  
[www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers](http://www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers)

Alternatively, please contact Emily Fraser, HR Assistant  
Telephone: 01304 245951

E-mail: [emily.fraser@spencerhospitals.com](mailto:emily.fraser@spencerhospitals.com)

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Please contact **Laura Christmas** on 01732 460553

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(Part time Maternity Cover)

3 days a week from September 2014

Number on roll:  
740

Type of School:  
11- 16 Mixed  
High School

Salary:  
Thamesview  
Unqualified  
Teacher Scale

Closing date:  
29th August 2014,  
9.00 am

Interviews:  
Week  
Commencing  
8th September  
2014

Do you want to join an innovative Vocational Team with high aspirations for students? We are seeking to appoint an outstanding practitioner who will work with a committed and inspiring team in raising professional practice and achievement further.

Thamesview is a school where everyone is expected to do their best and rapidly rising examination results reflect this. We benefit from a new school building that provides innovative learning environments and state of the art ICT equipment.

Our ideal candidate will:

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- have evidence of student achievement either in an educational institution or industry environment.
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- have high aspirations for all students, is passionate about learning and can contribute new and creative ideas to this subject area;
- have a proven track record of achievement

Candidates with teaching/training experience are encouraged to apply, though all experienced industry professionals will be considered. This is an excellent opportunity to develop your teaching skills and to be part of many new initiatives started by our outstanding vocational team. Flexible working hours will be required. We are committed to providing high quality learning experiences for our children and to supporting our staff through excellent CPD opportunities and bespoke leadership pathways.

If you are interested in joining us in our journey towards becoming an outstanding school, please contact our HR Manager on 01474 566552, ext. 1120; alternatively email [k.mcgowan@thamesview.kent.sch.uk](mailto:k.mcgowan@thamesview.kent.sch.uk). Further details and visit information can also be provided.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau). Thamesview School operates a non-smoking policy



## Librarian (Temporary Cover)

Type of School:  
11- 16 Mixed  
High School

Hours of work:  
37 hrs per week  
40 wks per year

Salary:  
Kent Range 7  
£20,878 to  
£23,752 pa  
Pro rata £18,018  
to £20,498 pa

Closing date:  
29th August  
2014, 9.00 am

Interviews:  
w/c 8th  
September 2014

We wish to appoint an enthusiastic member of staff to cover the role of Librarian while the post holder is on Adoption Leave from September 2014 onwards. We are looking for someone with good ICT skills and a passion for reading to take an active part in the day-to-day running of a library.

The successful applicant must:

- Have good interpersonal and communication skills.
- Be able to demonstrate a passion for and hands on approach to ICT.
- Work with diligence and accuracy.
- Be confident to work independently and multi-task.
- Be willing to undertake training.

The School received a very positive Ofsted Report in 2011 and was rated 'good' in every category with some outstanding features. Thamesview is a new school build that benefits from innovative learning environments and state of the art ICT equipment.

We are committed to providing high quality learning experiences for our students and to supporting our staff through excellent CPD opportunities.

Further details and an application form can be obtained from our HR Manager on 01474 566552 ext 1120; or email [k.mcgowan@thamesview.kent.sch.uk](mailto:k.mcgowan@thamesview.kent.sch.uk)

CVs without an application form will not be accepted.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. Appointment to this post is subject to a criminal background check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Thamesview School operates a non-smoking policy



## Kitchen Assistants Required

Kitchen assistants required weekdays  
(lunchtime and evening service) and weekends.

The Anchor & Hope is a country pub and restaurant based in the village of Ash (near Sevenoaks). The restaurant sits 40 covers and the bar area the same. The style of food being served is gastro.

The Anchor & Hope was taken over under new management a month ago and already sales of food has increased by almost double.

What we are looking for:

Kitchen assistants to work weekdays and weekends helping the current chef in delivering excellent quality gastro food in a speedy time.

We would like our kitchen assistants to come up with new and exciting gastro dishes which can be used on our daily specials board.

Contact details:

**Ben Eldridge and Emma Pearson**  
Anchor & Hope, South Ash Road,  
Ash, Kent TN15 7ER  
Tel: 01474 872382  
Email: [anchor\\_hope@hotmail.com](mailto:anchor_hope@hotmail.com)



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## LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

### HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116 STOPPING UP OF LAND AT ENSDEN OAST, LOWER ENSDEN ROAD, CANTERBURY

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT The Kent County Council as Highway Authority for the County of Kent propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Canterbury Magistrates' Court on 2 September 2014 at 10:30 for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at Ensden Oast, Lower Ensden Road, Canterbury as edged red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of the draft order and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of The Kent County Council at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

Any person to whom this Notice has been given or who uses the highway specified or who would be aggrieved by the making of the Order may appear before the Magistrates' Court to raise an objection or make a representation on the application. Any person intending to appear before the Magistrates' Court at the hearing of the application is requested to inform Hayley Fairbairn by post to Legal Services, The Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ, by email [Fairbairn@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Fairbairn@kent.gov.uk), or by telephone 01622 696063 before 23 August 2014 quoting reference number LS/21/104947/440.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Hayley Fairbairn using the contact details shown above.

JOHN BURR  
DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Schemes & Member Highway Fund  
Ashford Highway Depot  
Henwood Industrial Estate  
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Kent  
TN24 8AD



## PLANNING



### THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

**Y14/0776/SH** - 3 New Inn Cottages High Street Elham Canterbury Kent - Listed Building Consent for the replacement of external render to South elevation

**Y13/1074/SH** - The Grand The Leas Folkestone Kent CT20 2LR - Change of use and conversion of derelict rooms to form seven self contained units together with the upgrading of facilities and internal and external alterations.

**Y14/0798/SH** - 45 The Street Hawkinge Folkestone Kent CT18 7DD - Alterations and additions to front boundary treatment/ access.

**Y14/0779/SH#** - Gun House Cannon Street New Romney Kent TN28 8BH - Felling of a Holly, a Pittosporum and a Laburnum tree, all situated within a conservation area

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to [planning@shepway.gov.uk](mailto:planning@shepway.gov.uk). Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

# - The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

+ - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

The applications marked (\*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning  
Shepway District Council



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# Get in your saddle at Brands Hatch and take on some sporting legends

Cyclathon UK is a 12-hour event raising funds for charity by letting the public go wheel to wheel with some sporting celebrities, including top international rugby stars



IT'S one of the biggest boom sports in the land – and this autumn cycling takes centre stage at Brands Hatch, with riders from all walks of life welcome to take on sporting legends.

September's Cyclathon UK gives riders of varying abilities the chance to compete against international sportsmen in the annual 12-hour event on the Grand Prix circuit – and all the while raise funds for charity.

Cyclathon UK was created by former England rugby prop Victor Ubogu as a competitive event for cyclists, with the pledge to raise £1 million for charity over five years.

In addition to raising funds, riders can also contest prizes.

Brands Hatch was founded as a cycling venue before becoming world-

famous for car- and motorcycle-racing and hosted road-cycling at the 2012 Paralympics.

The course, which used much of the undulating Grand Prix circuit, was praised as the best yet, and the winning of two gold medals by racing driver Alex Zanardi was voted as the greatest moment of the Games.

The event will also revive old sporting rivalries from the rugby field thanks to the Home Nations Trophy, which offers charity riders and keen cyclists the chance to ride alongside celebrities.

Cyclathon UK events have attracted a range of sporting charities and helped raise more than £150,000.

The RFU Injured Players Foundation has entered teams every year as it works to raise funds for

seriously-injured rugby payers. Also joining this year from the rugby world will be teams from the Matt Hampson Foundation and J9 Foundation, South African legend Joost van der Westhuizen's charity.

Individuals and teams are welcome to register for Cyclathon UK. Organisers are also encouraging businesses and schools to come to the event to cheer on everyone taking part.

Entry is free for all spectators and the event will run for 12 hours from 7.30am until the award-presentation ceremony on the podium at 7.30pm.

Ubogu said: "A lot of my old rugby mates have got into cycling and every year we get more and more ex-players looking to race in Cyclathon."

"We launched the Home Nations Trophy as I was confident that my

## Shakey happy to extend lead after a 'hard weekend' at home



SHANE 'Shakey' Byrne extended his lead in the MCE British Superbike Championship at Sunday's Brands Hatch meeting but will be disappointed not to have claimed a victory in either of the two races at his home circuit.

Riding the Rapid Solicitors Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10R, the Sittingbourne ace took pole position but was beaten to first place by just a 10th of a second by fellow triple champion Ryuichi Kiyonari in the first race. It was Byrne's ninth successive podium.

In the second race, Byrne had to overcome being hit by James Ellison as he clattered out of the race. Somehow he stayed on his bike, although the race was stopped

### STANDINGS...

Points after five rounds

- 1) **Byrne** ..... 221pts
- 2) **Brookes** ..... 129
- 3) **Ellison** ..... 124
- 4) **Kiyonari** ..... 107
- 5) **Bridewell** ..... 101
- 6) **Walker** ..... 96

■ The next round of the championship is at Thruxton, Hampshire, from Friday to Sunday, August 1-3.

immediately. In the restarted contest in wet conditions, Byrne elected for caution and a safe points haul in

finishing fifth. His main championship rivals took the chequered flag behind him, allowing Byrne to extend his title lead further to 92 points.

His important Podium Credits tally is now 39, a lead of 25.

Byrne said: "It's been a hard weekend and although I managed to take the pole position I had to work really hard as we were constantly making changes with the bike to try to get it to work how I wanted it to."

"I really enjoyed the first race and fair play to Kiyo – he rode really well."

"I led for the first part of the race, but once he came by I knew I had to try to pass him as he was really strong coming out of the last corner."

"I tried a couple of times on the last

lap, but there wasn't a real opportunity to do anything so I settled for a safe second."

"The second race got off to the worst start when James crashed in front of me and the bike caught my brake-lever and trapped my hand between the handlebar, although, luckily, there was no major damage to my fingers."

"In the restart, we had difficult conditions to contend with in the wet, so the plan was to stay out of trouble as my main title rivals were all behind me."

"Another podium would have been great and while second and fifth could have been better, I was able to pick up the King of Brands trophy, so the weekend ended on a good note."





**CREATOR:**  
The cycling event is organised by former England rugby player Victor Ubogu, this picture. Above: the victorious Home Nations Trophy winners, the Welsh

fine squad of English Bulldogs would conquer the track.

"In Rory Underwood, Lee Mears, Phil de Glanville, Jon Callard, Graham Dawe and Jon Sleightholme we had some fit and strong cyclists.

"However, I underestimated the determination of Team Jocks led by Craig Chalmers and Scott Hastings

and the sheer madness of Colin Charvis, Alix Popham and the Welsh boys, who stayed in the bar until 5am, got on their bikes two hours later and still beat our entire team!

"Team Bulldogs have retreated and retreated and we are ready this year to steal the cup away from the Welsh."

Registration to compete in the

event is open until Friday, August 29.

Those wishing to enter a team or to ride solo can book by calling VU Ltd on 0871 871 5300.

Spectators are welcome all day with no charge to enter Brands Hatch during the event.

For further details, you can visit [www.cyclothouk.com](http://www.cyclothouk.com).



Pictures: ANDY KELLY

**DUEL:** Shane Byrne (67) had to settle for second place behind rival Ryuichi Kiyonari in the first race at Brands Hatch  
[kentnews.co.uk](http://kentnews.co.uk) [kent-life.co.uk](http://kent-life.co.uk)

KEA

## Fans have chance to choose Gills sound

WHAT music would you like Gillingham to walk out to at Priestfield?

The club are asking fans for their suggestions as to what the official walk-out sound should be during the forthcoming Sky Bet League One season.

Several songs have been used in the last 12 months to greet the players on to the pitch, but Gills now want supporters' views as the clock ticks down to the new campaign.

So the club are appealing for you to "get your thinking caps on and come up with a fantastic piece of motivational, hard-hitting, dramatic music that can get both the players and fans going before kick-off".

Manager Peter Taylor and his players want the fans to get involved ahead of the new season and you can submit your choice via Twitter and Facebook or email [media@priestfield.com](mailto:media@priestfield.com)

Songs will not be accepted that include inappropriate language or harmful references or could be considered inappropriate. 'Motivational' is the key word for team and supporters alike.

Following the pre-season friendly against Ipswich, a short-list of songs will be presented, with a final vote then being cast before the chosen song is played prior to the opening league game against Yeovil Town on Saturday, August 16.

Songs that have already been suggested include:

- **Eye of the Tiger**, by Survivor
- **Cochise**, by Audioslave
- **Heart of Courage**, by Two Steps From Hell

- **White Stripes**, by Seven Nation Army
- **Welcome to the Jungle**, by Guns N' Roses
- **The Liquidator**, by Harry J and the Allstars
- **Kashmir**, by Led Zeppelin
- **Fanfare for Rocky**, by Bill Conti
- **Thunderstruck**, by AC/DC
- **Ready to Go**, by Republica
- **We're Gonna Win**, by Bryan Adams

Gillingham won the north Kent clash at Princes Park on Tuesday night, thumping Dartford 4-0.

Goals from Amine Linganzi, Luke Norris, Antonio German and Brennan Dickenson sealed a convincing performance in which Taylor changed his entire side at half-time.

He started Danny Kedwell and Norris up front, with Doug Loft and Amine Linganzi running the midfield.

Josh Hare was selected at right-back, with Gary Borrowdale looking after the left side.

Linganzi's opener rounded off an excellent team move before Norris made it two in the 14th minute after pressurising Darts keeper Deren Ibrahim; it was Norris's first Gillingham goal.

Things continued in much the same vein in the second half and just before the hour mark Dack made it 3-0 with a cool finish.

A wholly impressive victory was wrapped up in the dying moments when Dickenson smashed home the visitors' fourth.

A poor evening for Dartford on the pitch, but they will be pleased with another healthy pre-season crowd, this time numbering 924.

## Gordon's girls bowling along

KENT lawn-bowler Sian Gordon has skipped the England women's four to two victories in the opening days of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

England beat Canada on the first competitive day of the Games on Thursday before comfortably overcoming Norfolk Island the following day.

The former Simon Langton Grammar School For Girls pupil led the team to a 21-11 victory over Canada before a 22-7 success against Norfolk Island.

In hockey, England's women beat Wales 2-0. Canterbury's Susannah

Townsend and Holcombe trio Maddie Hinch, Laura Unsworth and Lucy Wood were all in the winning team.

The England men's hockey team thumped Trinidad & Tobago 6-1 in another match with plenty of Kent interest.

Chatham-born Ashley Jackson and Holcombe's Ian Lewers, Nick Catlin and Barry Middleton all scored for England, while Canterbury player Mickel Pierre scored for the Caribbean outfit, for whom another Canterbury player, Kwan Browne, also featured.

## Kent win a classic to maintain run

MORE than 1,300 runs, 20 wickets and a match that didn't lose a minute to the weather and went into the final two hours of the final day... Kent's 89-run win over Surrey at Guildford on Wednesday was all that four-day cricket should be about.

Their third successive LV= County Championship Division Two victory in a row was sealed by the excellent

Darren Stevens, who finished with figures of 5-68.

Earlier Kent had been dismissed for 292, setting Surrey a target of 303.

Dilshan aside, they were always up against it and were eventually dismissed for 213.

Kent made 408 in their first innings, Sam Northeast top-scoring with 91, and Surrey 398 in theirs.

Keep up-to-date with all Kent's sports news via social media on:

Twitter @KentSport Facebook [www.facebook.com/kentsport.3](http://www.facebook.com/kentsport.3)



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**62 Reg Vauxhall Corsa 1.2 SXi [AC] 3dr,**  
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**£6,400**



**61 Reg Ford Fiesta 1.25 Zetec [82] 3dr,**  
13,580 Miles

**£7,000**



**10 Reg Ford Focus 1.6 Titanium 5dr,**  
16,106 Miles

**£7,700**



**62 Reg Ford Fiesta 1.4 TDCi [70] Zetec 3dr,**  
12,395 Miles

**£8,400**



**61 Reg Mercedes Benz A-Class A160  
Classic SE CVT Auto 5dr, 25,000 Miles**

**£8,400**



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